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Mary Hope

From

Her Father

Jan 24 1883.

THE JOSEPHINE GALLERY.



THE QUEEN





THE
JOSEPHINE GALLERY.

EDITED BY
ALICE AND PHŒBE CARY.

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J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.

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JOSEPHINE GALLERY.

ERAS IN WOMAN'S LIFE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF ZCHOCKE.

MY father formed at the University an intimate friendship with a young and very gifted man named Waldern. When they left the high school, the night before their separation, with tearful eyes they pledged each other over a glass of punch and swore to remain true to each other even to their last moments; and whatever might be their future lot, if it were in any manner possible, they agreed to see each other every year. There have been many friendships sworn, and faith often pledged, over a glass of punch or wine, but people return to a more quiet state of mind—they look back upon youthful enthusiasm, and smile at it—they forget themselves. The times change, and men change with them.

■

Yet it was different with my father and young Waldern. They kept their word and faith. They grew sober, but their hearts beat warmly, even in riper years. Their paths in life were very distinct, but their souls always turned towards each other, notwithstanding the distance which separated them. They married, but they never forgot their brotherlike tenderness. Once every year they visited each other, notwithstanding they were separated by a three days' journey. And even when they each had the engagements of an office, and a family of children, they devoted two or three weeks to their annual visit.

For several years, at first, the visits took place alternately at their different homes. Afterwards, it was usually my father who made the journey, and was entertained by his friends. I do not know how this happened; but Waldern was rich by marriage and inheritance, dwelt in the city and held an office at court, which gave him a great deal of occupation; these reasons might have kept him at home. My father held the office of head Forester in a village; his house had no superfluous room for guests accustomed to luxury; perhaps it was more pleasant for him to see, once a year, the varied bustle of the city, than for the courtier to inspect the woodcutting in a forest, or the table in a village; for some reason, however, it came at last to be the custom for my father, every summer, to take a journey and visit his friend.

I might have been a boy of ten years old, when my

mother dressed me in new clothes from head to foot, and my father said,

"Gustavus, you shall go with me to the city, this time. My brother Waldern has long desired to see you."

Who was so gay as I! The mamma travelled with us this time. For a quarter of a year we looked forwards to the journey. I was the only child remaining to my parents; they enjoyed my childish anticipations of the wonders of the city.

In fact, there was enough for me to see and hear in the city. It seemed to me like life in a fairy tale, every day something new. Waldern was an exceedingly agreeable man, but he had an only daughter, just as old as I was, named Augustina, who seemed to me much more agreeable than he was. She jumped and danced incessantly before me, and her first question was, "Gustavus, have you seen my new doll?" Then she seized me by the arm, and I was obliged to admire the doll, whose splendid dresses, of which she had at least a dozen, were changed every day. I was also called to express my delight at the sight of the doll's furniture, her tables and chairs. The second day, however, Augustina let the doll repose, and rambled with me about the grounds. She taught me to dance, and I taught her to play soldier in the garden, with flower-stalks for guns. We were never separated, and from morning till evening in an incessant frolic and play.

"Listen, old friend," said Waldern, one evening, at supper, to my father; "we have charming children."

At these words I looked at Augustina, for I had not yet thought whether she were pretty or not. And to be sure her dark locks, confined only by a simple rose-colored band—the delicate oval of her fine face—the black, animated, roguish, good-humored eyes—her red plump lips—the graceful motions of her whole body—all appeared to me to be really pretty.

“Papa,” cried Augustina, with a face wonderfully between sour and sweet, “if I only had such pretty hair and eyes as Gustavus, you would certainly think I should do very well.”

“Old friend,” continued Waldern, without suffering himself to be interrupted by the little vanity of Augustina, “our friendship must descend to our children, and they shall make a couple ; it is plain they are intended for each other.”

My father nodded smilingly, and raised his wine-glass. The old people touched glasses. I did not exactly understand what the chamberlain meant by the inheritance. But Augustina explained it by a question she put to her father :

“Indeed, little papa,” cried she, “do you mean that Gustavus shall be my husband ? Oh, that is most charming. I shall certainly love him dearly. Oh, yes, papa, let it be so ; do you not like it, Gustavus ?”

A loud laugh went round the table. The next day we played man and wife. We had a wedding, but before that we had a betrothal. In the garden, which was

bordered by grape-vines, we had our church between two acacia trees, which were then rare in Germany. A wooden garden bench was the altar ; a cousin of Augustina's, somewhat older than we were, who often came to play with us, was the priest. Augustina had arranged everything ; two pewter rings, set with green and red glass stones, had been purchased ; these were exchanged before the altar, and because on account of their large size they tumbled from our fingers, they had ribbon wound about them on the under side.

After the wedding, we went to a wedding feast in a corner of the garden. Table and chairs were placed, sugar-plums of all kinds, cake and milk, were served up in a doll's tea-set by the bride herself. Everything went off bravely. After the feast, we had a dance, the cousin being musician.

Yet why should all this childish nonsense be repeated? Three weeks passed away in the city like a dream to me. And when we separated, there was sorrow and crying between the husband and wife. We begged them not to separate us, but our parents consoled us, laughed at our emotion, and at last took us from each other with the promise that we should soon have another visit.

We did not go back again so soon to the city as I wished. At home everything seemed empty, dead, and solitary. For some time I wept in secret for Augustina. And even when I ceased to grieve, and became accustomed again to the quiet house of my parents, and the

stillness of the village and the forest—for this soon happened—all was not yet right in every corner.

For this reason I was well pleased that a change took place. My father placed me at school in a neighboring city. I was delivered over to his acquaintance, the rector of the school—an old, worthy, learned man—as a pupil and a boarder. My mother wept bitterly when I went away from home. She packed my trunk closely with my clothes and books, but I found room enough to stow Augustina's pewter ring between the folds of a handkerchief. My good mother herself first carefully wrapped it up in paper.

A life of study with the rector was not at first altogether pleasant to me, but I soon came to like the bustle of the boys in school. Multiplication, division, conjugations, definitions, extemporizing, all now went briskly along, and time went along with it. As the city where my education was conducted was only three miles from my native village, I was often at home. This was always a high festival for me, for I could only be there a day at a time. Oh, maternal love! oh, heart of a father! How unspeakably happy was I every time I returned to the scene of my youthful sports.

The rector, my master, was an excellent man; I loved him like a second father. His learning made him seem to me like a superior being. He had not much intercourse with the inhabitants of his little city. He delighted rather to live with the exalted spirits

of other days, and with his youthful pupils ; "for," said he, "there I see the perfected, and you bear in your hearts the seeds of perfection. Many of you will deceive my hopes ; yet I hope by some to work in the world, when I no longer breathe under the heavens."

I now approached through the porch of the grammar into the holy of holies of ancient wisdom. How did Homer and Curtius excite me, but above all others, Plutarch. I could have wept over the great world of the past. How merciful seemed to me the men of our own times, still, in fact, barbarians on whom may be seen the scars of the strong hand, of slavery, and the dust of the people's wanderings. I read, I translated, I wrote verses, I was happy, as knowledge makes every young man.

I had nothing to do with the journeys to the city, though my father regularly made his visits there, in conformity to his old customs. I no longer sighed after it ; I had altogether forgotten my little wife there. I should have lost her little pewter ring, if I had not put it aside with some other toys in a little bag, where it lay undisturbed for years. My vacations I usually spent at home, in company with some of my fellow-students, or made journeys to visit them at theirs.

Thus the years passed away. In my nineteenth, the rector considered me prepared for the University, and my father sent me there. It was a bitter parting, for I was unwilling to leave the worthy man, who, in

forming my mind, had laid the foundation of all my inward happiness. Still more unwillingly did I bid adieu to the neighboring home of my father, from which I should now be fourteen miles distant. Now, everything which I had prized and loved as a child, became more dear. I visited again all the scenes of my sports ; and as I was one day packing up for my journey, I did not neglect the little bag containing my playthings. I took out the smallest articles, as memorials and relics of my departed childhood, and laid them near Homer and Horace in my trunk. Augustina's pewter ring was among them.

Notwithstanding I made verses in which the moon above and tender love, the young heart gay, the sun's bright ray, hearts and smarts, figured largely, yet of the ring of the little maiden and the city, I retained no distinct impression. I looked rather for the eyes of modest virgins, on which I could honorably pay a couple of Petrarchian sonnets ; but this I did with fear and trembling. And I cannot say that any one pair of the many eyes, whose lightning glance I often met, ever inspired me to write an ode. And yet, among the Pandects, and Institutions, and other forms of science with which I was surrounded, because my father desired to see me a head forester, my mind still sighed for something. I did not know what it was, but I did not find it.

I had advanced so far, during the three years which I had passed at the University, that I was able to

become *Doctor utriusque juris*. I was advised, after having taken my decree, to apply for a professorship, and give private lectures. But my father, as head forester, considered no office in the State so honorable as a forest counsellor; and through the influence of the chamberlain, Waldern, I was established as *Refendarius* in a provincial city.

Before I went to my post, I wished to visit my parents. I had been to see them once a year, during all the time which I had passed at the University. My father wrote to me to meet him in the city, where he and my mother were going to visit our old friend Waldern. I had some farther directions respecting my office to receive from the latter.

I hastened thither, in compliance with these directions. On the journey I thought sometimes of Augustina, but always with aversion, as if I were ashamed of our childish jests. Meanwhile, thought I, she must be pretty well grown, and perhaps she is still handsome. But the thought was odious to me, that our parents would perhaps make a serious matter of these jests, and might couple us together in earnest. It seemed to me this meeting had been contrived for no other purpose. I took a mental oath that this never should be.

And I kept my oath, but certainly against my will. For, after the first hearty embraces on entering Waldern's house, I looked round the apartment, and there, standing ready to salute every one, was a young lady, beautiful as a Hebe, with black, piercing eyes, into

which I could no more look than into the noonday sun, without incurring the danger of being struck blind. Ah, I was already blind; I only saw that she saluted me with a bow and with blushing cheeks. What I replied to this I do not know. I wished myself a thousand miles off, that I might collect my thoughts; and yet I should have rather died than have gone away.

I was fortunately relieved from my embarrassment by the embraces and questions of my parents and their friends. I was obliged to answer, and thus by degrees recovered my self-possession. I heard Mr. Waldern say to the charming unknown, "Augustina, is supper ready?" Alas, thought I, is that indeed Augustina? I had not courage to believe that this unearthly creature was once, in times past, my little wife. Such a thought seemed almost blasphemous.

We went into the supper-room. Mr. Waldern offered my mother his arm, my father his to Madame Waldern—Augustina remained for me. I tremblingly advanced to give her mine. She had better have offered me hers, for certainly I needed a support.

"How you have grown," said she. "I should never have known you."

"And I—and I"—stammered I. "I wish we were still little." This I said in all sadness. It was the silliest thing I could have thought of, for what girl of nineteen would wish to be a little miss again?

"Indeed! why do you wish that?" said she, in astonishment.

"Then I was so happy! oh, happy as now I shall never dare to be." Here a sigh burst from me, and I touched my left hand to her right, which was lying on my arm. Augustina remained an answer in my debt. Perhaps I had again said something foolish. I was ashamed of myself.

At supper the company were gay and lively. I became accustomed to Augustina's glances. I could even give her a reasonable answer, but eating was, in spite of all reason, entirely out of the question. The more I looked, the more beautiful she seemed. The next day she seemed still more so; and the third, still more. It was manifest witchcraft. I repented my oath, which I had far too hastily made, in the postchaise, on my journey, and resolved, without hesitation, to become perjured at some future time.

On the evening of the third day it happened, I know not how, that we found ourselves together in the garden. I had for some time desired to say something to her, but did not exactly know what it should be. We reached the grape-vine walk. I remembered it well. "Oh, how large the two young acacias have grown," said I; "their branches now meet."

"Do you still remember these trees?" said Augustina, timidly.

"Could I forget my happiness?" said I. "Oh, how often have my thoughts been here! Ah, you were often in this walk, I suppose, without thinking of your little Gustavus, who shed so many tears in parting from you."

"How do you know that?" said she, with a gentle, sinking voice.

We entered into the grape-vine walk; it was darkened by the shade of the acacias. I looked about me. All the world of my youth revived within me. I looked silently at Augustina. Ah, how different was everything now! Her eyes sunk to the ground. I took her hand. "Here was once the church."

She pointed to the green garden bench, and lisped, "There the altar; I know it all."

"Actually 'all'?" said I; "Ah, Augustina, all?"

"Oh, Gustavus!" stammered she.

After a moment I drew out the pewter ring of betrothal. "Do you remember this, Augustina?"

When she saw it, her countenance brightened. She took it, looked long at it, and her eyes grew moist. "It is the same," said she, and examined it again with extreme emotion. "Oh, Gustavus, you are better than I am." When she became more calm, she drew a gold ring from her finger, placed it on my hand, and put the pewter one on her own. "This I keep. I am thine forever; art thou also mine, Gustavus?"

It will be understood that I answered as a poet of the age of twenty can answer. We swore by sun, moon, and stars, by the upper and the lower world, to love each other and belong to each other, on this side and the other side of the grave. Yet why should I relate all this circumstantially? Every one knows the use lovers make of time and eternity, heaven and earth.

Love placed the Paradise of Adam and Eve about us. Three weeks passed away in innocence and bliss like a summer's dream. Then the talk was of parting. Good heavens! it seemed to me that I had but just arrived!

I wondered at the inattention of our parents. They might have seen what was passing between us. Our looks, our actions, everything betrayed that we were now going over in earnest what we had played ten years before. And yet the Director Waldern never said at supper what he said ten years before: "Old friend, our children must inherit our friendship; we must make a couple of them."

With Augustina I had never the courage to speak of a formal engagement with our parents—of promise of marriage—of legal betrothal—a wedding, and such prosaic accidents of true love, which are demanded by common souls; this was all too little, too profane for us. We supposed our parents had settled all such business between themselves.

Meantime the parting hour came, which we had dreaded for three days before. My father could be urged to stay no longer. The morning of my departure, we two lovers, before sunrise, were in the dear grape-walk, to speak to each other once more alone, and explain all our feelings. With tears and vows the holy union was renewed. The vine-walk was actually changed to the church, the bench to the altar. We fell despairingly upon our knees, and stretched our hands in prayer to heaven, and made the most solemn pro-

mises. I assured Augustina that, as soon as I reached home I would speak to my father, and then, returning to the city would receive from her parents her hand. Augustina blushed crimson when I called her my bride, my future wife. She hid her face in my bosom, and stammered, "Only Gustavus."

Thus we separated.

I had no sooner reached our village with my parents, than I seized the first opportunity to speak with my father alone, and reveal to him all my wishes and hopes of happiness. He, as well as my mother, had, during our journey, joked with me upon Augustina's conquest, when I had been lost in reveries. This gave me occasion for confession.

My father, a very sensible and upright man, and a tender parent, listened to me quietly and patiently; and patience he certainly needed, for I talked to him a whole hour, that I might explain to him the inviolable vow Augustina and I had made to each other.

"Child," said he, "I have nothing against it. I honor the feelings of both of you. I am glad you and Augustina love each other. The thought of her will guard you from many wrong thoughts and feelings. Yet I advise you not to be too hasty at this time. You are still young, hardly more than two and twenty. You have yet no office which will give you a support. But this is necessary before marriage. Augustina is rich, to be sure, but you would not be supported by your wife. Nothing is more dishonorable than for a man to make

himself dependent upon the property of a wife, and have to thank her for a fortune. The husband should be a man, and, by his wealth and his labors, support his wife and children. I, myself, from my office of forester, derive but a moderate income. I can only give or leave you a small property. You must first labor for yourself, as I have labored for myself.

"These circumstances may perhaps have the effect of causing my friend Waldern to refuse you, at least for the present, the hand of Augustina. She, brought up in the bosom of luxury, is accustomed to certain conveniences that have become necessities to her. You are not in a condition to provide her with these necessities. Yet another circumstance is added to all these. The ages of both of you are not favorable for a long continued happy marriage. Augustina is about as old as you are. This is not well. Woman comes to maturity earlier, but she fades also earlier than man. You would be unhappy to have an old wife, when you are still in the fullness of your manly strength. Between a man and a woman of the same age there is always a difference of at least ten years."

In this manner spoke my father. Every one will perceive that he was manifestly wrong. I proved it to him as clear as the sun, and was very much astonished that he did not admit the force of my reasoning. I appealed to my mother.

"Gustavus, you are right," said she, "I must own you are right. Augustina is an angel; I do not wish

for a better daughter-in-law. But your father is right, too. I can advise you to do nothing better than he has done. God help you," said she, weeping and tenderly kissing me.

We had now daily conversations and consultations. We never came to any conclusion. I suffered unspeakably in silence. After a week or two, when I was making preparations to begin my journey to the city, and from there to the little town where I was to shine as refendary, a letter came from Mr. Waldern to my father. Mr. Waldern's letter was full of complaints and lamentations about Augustina, who, after my departure, was inconsolable, and was obliged to take to her bed with a fever. She had now become more tranquil. But he adjured me now, that I had no possession by which I could, without making myself ridiculous, think of making a serious engagement with his daughter, not to visit the city again. I should only, by doing so, fruitlessly renew her sorrow and endanger her health. He repeated to me what he had already said to his daughter, that he did not object at all to our union, if I were in any office which would afford me a considerable income, and which I could not fail to be in, in a few years. Still further, he had no objection to my keeping up a correspondence with Augustina, to make up for our separation, if I wished it.

This letter at first entirely overpowered me. I raved and raged against the tyranny and cruelty of men, till from fatigue I became quiet. I then began to

think that Waldern had written very sensibly, and had promised me more than, from what my parents had said to me, I had a right to expect. The letter gave me, even, a sort of triumph over my father. I blessed Waldern. I resolved to act like a man, and to win the hand of Augustina by my exertions. The permission to correspond by letter, I availed myself of at once. I wrote Augustina a letter three pages long, and a short one to Mr. Waldern filled with my grateful emotions.

Waldern had worldly wisdom. He knew the human heart, and did not strive to dam up the violent stream of youthful inclination. The stream would only have become more furious and powerful and destructive. Now it flowed more quietly.

I did not journey towards the city, but went to the place where, as refendary, I was to enter the course which was to lead me to an office of more profit and trust. The parting from my dear parents, the diversions of the journey, the first entrance into my new abode, and the beginning of the business of my office, had no small effect in bringing me to a more tranquil state of mind.

I labored with the most untiring diligence to perform, in the most perfect manner, the duties of my calling. My exertions were noticed. Every one did honor to my knowledge of business. I had but one fault, I was too young. I must first reach the *annum canonicum*. Oh, how I sighed for my five-and-twentieth year.

At last I reached it. One lives up to any age if he does not die first! But there was sorrow here. My good mother died at that time, and a few months after her my father also. Yet my father had the pleasure, before his death, of seeing me assessor in a provincial college, with the title of counsellor, and endowed with a small salary. A great step towards the summit of my wishes, the hand of Augustina.

My correspondence with my beloved was in a good way. To be sure, during the first years we never wrote a letter which was not three pages long. In the course of the second year, we cut off at least half; and by the third, it was reduced to a single page. Time does wonders, but it does not extinguish true love. Augustina had, in the meantime, refused several young men who had paid their addresses to her. My letters were generally filled with regrets that I was not yet in a situation to ask her hand. My present salary was barely sufficient for my own personal expenses. The little inheritance from my father was nearly expended. She on her part assured me her parents were daily becoming more and more desirous she should accept some of the proposals of marriage which were made her, because she would soon have reached a certain age, when she would not be in so much demand, and would be called an old maid.

I felt that her parents were right; and my understanding with Augustina being clear, I forgot the former proposal, and wrote to Mr. Waldern with regard

to Augustina, that, though I was not yet able to support a wife, yet I was consoled by the brightest hopes. This consolation did not go far with Waldern. He, in the meantime, refused again to give me Augustina, and gave me to understand that I made his daughter unhappy by these useless negotiations, since she was now in the middle of the twenties, and was advancing with a quick step towards the thirties.

On receiving this letter, I sighed sorrowfully. "The man is right, perfectly right," said I; and I was magnanimous enough to acknowledge this to Augustina herself. I wrote to her, that, as I could not see with any certainty the time when I could with propriety ask for her hand, she should not sacrifice her best years for me. I should not love her less, even if she were the wife of another; and my happiness would be increased, if I only knew she were more happy.

This gave materials for a correspondence that lasted for nearly a year, and in which the same circumstances were considered on all sides. We wished to exceed each other in love and generosity. But at last I gained the victory, or rather Time, the wonder-worker, gained it, for Augustina was already six-and-twenty years old, a fatal period for maidens who would not increase the number of the eleven thousand in heaven.

However, very unexpectedly I received a letter from the city in an unknown hand. A counsellor of justice, Von Winter, thanked me in the tenderest and most feeling manner for my magnanimity, for Augustina was

now his wedded wife. He begged for my friendship, and Augustina herself added a few pretty lines to the letter of her "dear husband," as she called him.

When I read this, it seemed as if I had fallen from the clouds. I cursed my untimely magnanimity, and Augustina's faithlessness. But what was to be done? Augustina was six-and-twenty years old. She was not altogether in the wrong. Notwithstanding, I was filled with extreme vexation on her account, which was increased when, a year after, her father died, by which event she arrived at free power over her hand and wealth. If she had only waited one year longer. Now it was all too late. I wrote not another line to her, nor she to me. We became to each other as if we had never met.

Partly in revenge and retaliation for Augustina's faithlessness, partly to amuse my mind, I looked about among the daughters of the land. Lovely roses were blooming there ; willingly would I have gathered one of them, but alas the money !

Fortune now favored me. I was in a better place, in another city. Some of my labors drew the attention of the minister of state. I was employed in several important causes, and the success of these operated in such a manner, that when I had reached my thirtieth year, I received the honorable appointment of president of the criminal court, in the province in which I had until now been laboring. I had, besides the honor, a liberal salary—was able to keep house handsomely—

visited the best families in the neighborhood, even where there were grown up daughters.

Thoughts of the city sometimes drove the blood to my cheeks, though I imagined I had forgotten Augustina, or I should rather say Madame Von Winter. As far as I could hear from travellers, her husband was a somewhat old gentleman, of noble family ; and the gracious lady lived, as they say in the court cities, upon the *court footing*, surrounded by admirers, every day engaged in parties of the nobility, pic-nics, rondos, assemblies, ridottos, concerts, etc. The old simplicity of her father's house was gone. I was grieved when I heard these things. I could not accustom myself to think of the good, the celestial Augustina as so employed. Sometimes I could not but think, "Thank God, that she is not my wife."

A second letter from the minister of justice made it necessary for me to take a journey to the city, which I had not visited for many years. I was received by the minister, and even by the monarch, in the most flattering manner. I had been three days in the city, without having found a moment in which I could visit Augustina, although I had intended it. One morning I received the following note :

"MY DEAREST Mr. PRESIDENT—

"Must your old friend learn first from the papers that you are here? Under fear of my displeasure, I command you to come this evening and sup

with me, in company with some good friends. Do not fail.

“Yours, attached,

“A. VON WINTER.”

Natural enough! who would fail? But yet the tone in which she asked me, did not exactly please me. I had imagined her first address very differently, for there had come over me a peculiar anxiety and fear when I, on the previous days, had thought, “I must go and see her.” The separation for so many years, the various succeeding events in this interval of time, the old passion, and since then the changes between us two; these ideas all filled me with peculiar and, I may say, contradictory emotions, which made me dread the first meeting with my former love.

With a violent heart-beating I entered the coach, and alighted before the old Waldern house, now the house of Winter. Over the door I saw the coat of arms of a nobleman cut in the stone. Within, everything was new and elegant, so much so that I hardly knew myself there; but two quick-footed servants, in pale green and gold livery, conducted me in the right direction, up the broad staircase, and into a spacious saloon filled with company.

The lady of the house, the gracious lady, received me standing at the entrance of the apartment. It was Augustina—yes, it was she; and yet it was not exactly herself. Certainly not the fresh beauty of a girl of

nineteen ; but yet she was charming as a woman of thirty—full, majestic, easy. I could scarcely stammer out a word or two, I was so surprised, so bewildered. Her eyes, too, her blushes, told me of her quickened emotions. But she was so entirely her own mistress, so self-possessed, that she saluted me in the most agreeable manner possible, drew me from my embarrassment, reproved me sportively for having neglected an old acquaintance for so long a time, and taking me by the hand led me to the company, and presented me as a good friend whom she had not seen for ten years.

I soon recovered myself in the confusion of a general sprightly conversation. The lady of the house must do the honors of the house. She was equally kind, pleasant and amiable to all. As she came again for a moment near me, she said—

“How long do we have the pleasure, Mr. President, of keeping you in our city?”

And meeting me afterward again, “Excellent, my dearest. I tell you once for all, I expect you here every day, and appoint you for the whole time of your stay my *Cavaliere servente*.”

I now made my request to her to present me to her husband. “Indeed,” cried she, “I cannot tell you where he is ; I believe, however, he is on a party in the country, with the royal master of the hunt. Apropos,” added she, “are you married?”

The evening passed away. There was no opportunity for any confidential conversation with Augustina

We danced, we feasted ; wit and folly reigned, and pomp and elegance dazzled.

I had, the next day, the happiness of seeing the husband of Augustina. The counsellor of justice was a man over fifty, very fine, very polite, nice, but sickly, feeble, and meagre in his appearance. "Not so, my brave sir," said Augustina once in passing me. "You look very proud near my dog of a husband, and think to humble my taste a little, but I assure you, on my honor, he is, after all, a very good sort of a person."

The tone of the house did not please me, and nothing but the urgency of Augustina that I would be at all her parties, as much as my business would allow me, could have moved me to go there. She did not please me ; and yet I found her so amiable, her lively manner, her grace, her wit, drew me there again, often when old recollections and a comparison of the present with the past would have held me back. I even felt she might be dangerous to me, in spite of her levity and her fashionable airs.

"But are you indeed happy, my gracious lady?" said I to her, one evening, when I at last sat alone with her in her box at the opera.

"What do you call happy?" replied she.

I took her hand, pressed it affectionately, and said, "I call that happiness which you once gave my heart. Are you happy?"

"Do you doubt it, Mr. President?"

"Then I am happy, if you speak truly."

"Speak truly? So, my little President, you are still the same old enthusiast. It befits you very well. But do not forget that an opera box is not a confessional. To tell you what you want to hear, we must be by ourselves. Visit me to-morrow morning, at breakfast."

I pressed her hand in gratitude. After the opera, we went together to the house of a friend of Augustina, a lady of the court, to join a supper party.

The next morning I was at her house at eight o'clock. The gracious lady was still asleep. At ten I was admitted. She was in a morning dress, but only the more lovely for that. Now came the confession, as she called it. I learned that when one has passed the sentimental season of girlhood, she must seek her happiness in solid things. She was very well contented with her husband, because he was reasonable enough to leave her undisturbed to her own occupations. The old-fashioned ideas which we have in our childish years, vanish when our understanding comes. To be sure, she could not deny that she had not by any means loved her husband as she had loved me; and she added, with a roguish smile, "old love does not rust. I like you still very well, but believe me, I had rather have you for a lover than a husband."

I had much to say in contradiction of this, but she answered it all with laughter. Meantime her woman came and announced that breakfast was ready. She

took my arm, and we went into the well-known garden.

Ah, the dear garden, I no longer recognized it. The old flower beds were gone ; instead of them there were clumps of foreign shrubs and trees arranged after the so-called English taste, between green grass plats, single paths wound about them. The vine bower was changed into a close Chinese temple, shaded by the two acacias. We entered it. It was the prettiest boudoir in the world. Instead of the green wooden bench, a well-stuffed mahogany sofa offered us a seat before a japan table, on which was placed coffee, chocolate and sweetmeats.

" Oh, the beautiful holy vine bower, our church, our altar, our childish blessedness, oh, where is it all ?" sighed I, and gave a glance to Augustina, filled with sad reproach.

" Does happiness, then, depend upon the vine bower," said she, smiling. " I suppose, for the same reason, I am not half so dear to you as I was ten years ago, because I no longer wear the same dress."

" But, Augustina—yes I must call you so once more, and this place gives me the right—have not certain memorials of those divine moments always remained with you? For example, see here your gold ring, which, ten years since, you placed upon my finger. I have constantly worn it since as a holy treasure.

" And I, to honor you, also, at least at breakfast to-day, have the well known pewter ring," said Augustina, and she held her hand before my face. " You see it has

turned black, and yet I place it in my jewel case, a jewel among jewels."

As I looked at the ring, a bitter feeling came over me. I took her beautiful hand, which the ring made more beautiful, and impressed upon it a kiss of gratitude. Augustina withdrew her hand, and said,

"Gustavus, you are still the same impatient enthusiast; it is not well for you to be near me. With you I might perhaps have been happier."

After we had breakfasted, we left the Chinese temple, while she held up her finger with a threatening air, and said,

"Ah, Mr. President, it is not well to confess to you."

She then resumed her usual sportive manner of conversing, and reminded me of the hour when I should meet her at a ball in the evening.

Though I remained fourteen days longer in the city, I had no farther opportunity to see Augustina alone, perhaps because I avoided any. Notwithstanding, from the moment I left the Chinese temple, I felt the last spark of love extinguished in my breast. I could not conceal from myself that there might be danger in our meeting in this way. The time of my departure came. Oh, how different the parting from that of ten years ago! We separated with drums and trumpets, at a ridotto, which I left early, because I was to set out on my journey the next day. We had waltzed with each other, and said many pretty things. She accompanied me to the door, and called after me an *adieu mon ami*,

while she was reaching her hand to another partner in the dance.

I was glad at heart to fly from the wearisome bustle of the great world, and belong again to myself. I mused at my ease over what was to be my future life, as I travelled through fields and forests, through cities and villages. I mused upon the future—the past with Augustina had become painful to me. Oh, how time had changed everything! My journey—I was four days in reaching my home—was somewhat tedious, for it was without any adventure. The last day I met with one of a very pleasing kind.

My servant stopped in the morning, in a village, before an inn, to feed his horses. I went into the house, and heard the sound of quarrelling. The host and a half-drunken hired coachman, whose carriage was before the door, were disputing. A young, well-dressed lady, in a riding-habit, sat weeping at a seat near the table. The difficulty had arisen because the driver would not carry the lady to the place where she maintained he had agreed to take her, but insisted upon going to a little town away from the principal road, where he had other business. He declared that he had, in the first bargain, agreed to carry her to this place. The host had taken the part of the young, timid beauty. On hearing she was the daughter of the minister of a village an hour's ride from my home, and but little out of my way there, I soon set the matter right. The lady, after some hesitation (I told her where I was going

and who I was), yielded to my request, and became my companion.

On the way there was much conversation. She had a sweet, soft voice, the purest, most angelic innocence in all her looks. In my whole life, no ideal pictured beauty had I ever seen with such loving, kind and trusting eyes. I learnt she was called Adela. Her brother, two weeks before, had carried her to a small town where she had been visiting at the burgomaster's, her father's brother. A misunderstanding had doubtless arisen in giving the directions to the stage-coachman, to which I was indebted for a very pleasant day. Adela, with all her good humor, appeared to have much natural wit. She was, however, rather too timid. When I reached her father's village, and I gave her to him, a stout, active old man, with what ecstasy did she throw her arms about his neck. I almost wished myself her father. Then appeared for the first time her natural and true manner. I was not able to stay long, notwithstanding the worthy pastor besought me to do so. I promised, however, to renew my visit; which, however, I did not very soon. I forgot it between business and amusement.

At a ball, about half a year after, I saw among the dancers another lady—for in the thirty-first year of an unmarried man, ladies become of the greatest importance, one trembles more and more at the number of years—I saw, as I remarked, a dancer that might be called incontestably the queen of all the beauties present.

The young men fluttered like butterflies about her. It warmed my heart, if the eyes of the pretty sylphide sometimes turned towards me ; and to my astonishment that happened often. But at last it seemed to me as if I had seen this lovely figure in some company before, perhaps in the city, at Augustina's. I asked my neighbor who she was. Heavens ! it was Adela ! very different certainly, in her ball dress from herself in her riding veil. As she went to rest after the last dance, I, a butterfly of thirty-one, approached the young lady, and she was so kind as to recognize her travelling companion. We danced. I inquired after the health of her father, regretted that business had prevented me from visiting him—an exaggeration, perhaps, but before such an angel one must wash himself clean. I promised myself soon the pleasure of a visit, with a pleasant freedom. She assured me a visit from me would give her father great pleasure.

The ball caused a great revolution in me. The president of the criminal court became again a poet. I could not sleep for the whole night long ; I saw nothing but celestial glances, dancing seraphim, and Adela floating between them. I wondered that so lovely, so amiable, so bewitching a maiden had not yet found a husband. Her father, they say, is as worthy as she is beautiful ; but, alas, he has not much wealth ! Oh, the fools ! After a few days I went to visit the minister—repeated the visit from week to week. Soon I was considered as the friend of the family ; Adela would even reproach me if I staid away beyond the usual day, and once the

tears came into her eyes when I pretended that perhaps she would prefer I should not come so often. We quarrelled sometimes for the sake of making up again, and once in the course of the reconciliation I gave her a kiss, which did not renew the quarrel. She was silent, and her cheeks glowed with the deepest red. In short, I loved and was beloved. The worthy father shrugged his shoulders, and said, "You have no treasure with her but love, virtue, and economy ; but he who knows how to value these, has more than a ton of gold."

With the first flowers of spring, I wove the bridal wreath for my Adela. Her father himself blessed our union before the altar of his village church. And now, by the side of my noble little wife, I was the happiest of the happy.

In time we saw ourselves surrounded by blooming children—angels of love—who united us more tenderly to each other. Adela became more and more lovely every day ; a young mother is certainly more lovely than the most beautiful girl. The pure soul of Adela elevated my own ideas to a point they had never reached before. Man is never entirely happy until he has the courage to be virtuous. Before my marriage, I had only thought of saving and amassing wealth ; but when some years of our wedded life had passed, Adela's excellent management had made me feel that if I were to lose all I was worth, I could never be unhappy while Adela and my children were left me.

I now found that my departed father was entirely right in what he said when dissuading me from my pursuit of Augustina, in regard to the relative age of a husband and wife. For, when I had reached my fortieth year, and Adela her thirtieth, and we had children of six and eight years old frolicking about us, Adela was still a handsome woman, who might have made conquests. Augustina, on the contrary, had arrived at a matronly age.

I seldom heard from the latter. We ourselves never wrote to each other. I heard sometimes from strangers, that she was somewhat faded, but that she was surrounded by a coterie of young men, particularly poets and artists, to whom her open table was very agreeable. Then I learned that her husband was dead, and the poets who formed her court were middle-aged enthusiasts and mystics, protestant catholics, and that Augustina herself was much given to romancing, and some of her poetical effusions had graced the last Almanac of the Muses.

At the same time in which I received a new order from the minister to visit the court, I also had a letter from Augustina, consulting me on a lawsuit in which she had become involved with some of the relatives of her late husband, and requesting my advice and presence in the affair. I was glad that my approaching visit to the city gave me an opportunity to comply with her request.

I was forty, Augustina the same. She could not be

so dangerous to me as she was ten years before. This time I went the second day after my arrival in the city, without any heart-beating, to her house. I had sent before to know what time she would receive me, because I had been told she was seldom alone, being generally surrounded by fashionable poets, listening to or reading romantic jingle, talking religious mysticism, or at the card-table with ancient ladies or gentlemen—for play had become her passion. Her former friends, male and female, whom I had seen about her ten years before, had fallen off from her, for they were no longer sufficient for her. She was known throughout the city for her venomous tongue, was at enmity with everybody, and if one wished to know the city news, Madame Von Winter was the person to visit. This I had heard from two of the former friends of Augustina, whom ten years before I used to meet at her house. Hum—thought I—but these good friends are also ten years older, and perhaps have themselves some disposition to slander, or as they call it in the city, scandal.

It was a summer evening, and as I entered Augustina's house, the servant told me that her lady was with company in the garden. I went. Ah! the well known garden of my childhood! For the sake of affording the subject for a little joke with Augustina, I wore her gold ring, which she had twenty years before given me in exchange for the pewter one. Now the garden and the ring, the Chinese temple before me, I could not remain entirely unmoved.

"Is your lady alone?" I said to the servant on the way.

"No, she has company, only a few persons."

I entered the temple. There sat, at two tables, two parties, engaged so deeply in playing cards that they hardly saw me. I recognized Augustina. Oh, all powerful Time! how changed! No, there was no danger now. I reflected with delight on my Adela.

Augustina was so engrossed in play, that she only saluted me, and begged me to excuse her a moment until she could finish the game. When this was over, she arose, overpowered me with civil speeches and questions, ordered refreshments for me, and offered me cards. I declined this, as I did not understand the game.

"In heaven's name," said she, "then how do you kill time, if you do not play cards? It seems unaccountable in a man of your spirit."

She resumed her play; the game was faro. The banker had great luck; all the money of the players soon lay before him. Every passion here shone out in the burning cheeks, the piercing eyes, the compressed lips. The banker was radiant with pleasure.

"I have stripped you all quickly," said he. "We were speaking, just now, of my very costly diamond," and he displayed a ring on his finger. "I will stake it in a lottery against all the rings in the company."

Eagerly and with longing eyes they all viewed the diamond. They accepted the proposal. Madame Von Winter said—

"Rings trouble me at cards ; I have none on." But she looked at me ; " apropos, my friend, you are very kind, and will lend me yours for the moment."

Surprised at the request, I drew off Augustina's ring and reached it to her. " You see, my lady, it is yours ; you may remember it."

She looked hastily at it, and saying, " So much the better," throw it into the pool with the rest, and fixed her eyes upon the diamond. But the rings were all lost. The banker won. Even the holy ring of our first love was gone, and on the very spot where in tears I had received it. Oh, all-powerful Time, how dost thou overturn everything !

We went to supper. The guests were in good humor ; Augustina forced herself to appear gay, which gave to her aged features a disagreeable contortion. The wine was applied to, to raise the tone of the conversation ; it became more gay but not more wise. The news of the city was discussed ; their acquaintances and the secret histories of them passed in review. The conversation did not lack wit so much as charity, and to my great grief Augustina was the most full in wicked remarks. She did not hesitate, sometimes, to bear hard upon her own guests. Ah, could I have thought the adored, angelic being of fourteen would ever have reached this point ? I felt weary and disgusted ; and when, after supper, the cards were resumed I took my leave.

It distressed me to find myself in the city, or rather

to have seen Augustina so changed. I visited her once or twice with reference to the progress of her lawsuit, but I did not find her more agreeable than at first. In spite of the wrinkles in her face, she was not willing to be thought old. She freely applied rouge. I acted as if I did not perceive it. She now and then appeared willing to talk sentimentally of our former tender relation to each other, but it was disgusting to me. When I once let fall a word about her being forty years old, she looked at me with astonishment.

"I believe you are dreaming, Mr. President," said she; "your memory fails before its time. When we were first acquainted, you were ten and I five years old. I was still playing with my dolls—I remember it perfectly. A girl of ten years thinks no longer of her dolls, but on more serious matters. Therefore I am now five-and-thirty; and, between ourselves, it is not impossible that I should marry again. A very excellent man, one of our first poets, has been long seeking for my hand. All his poems to the Madonna, to the saints—all his holy legends, breathe the sweet fire of pure affection for me."

I gave my good wishes to the success of "the sweet fire of pure affection," and was glad to leave the neighborhood of the court, and return again to my Adela and her children.

One does not realize he is old until he sees the ravages of time in the well-known faces of his youthful friends. I returned from the city older than I went

there. But as I embraced again my true, my faithful Adela, and my children clamoring about me, I unpacked first this thing and then that, which I had brought as presents from the city ; then I grew young again. In the domestic circle of innocence and love is eternal youth.

“ In the course of time, many go before us into the better and enduring and higher world of spirits, and our hearts bleed for them. But even these separations make life and the world more important to us ; they join the Here and There more firmly in our minds, and carry something more spiritual, more exalted, into our thoughts, wishes and actions. The child is well pleased with a flower, a colored stone, a narrow play-ground, and grieves himself little about the pursuits of grown up men. The young man and the young maiden press out into the broad world and the free air. The nursery becomes too narrow for them. They would have something more. They win, they lose, they strive, they never are satisfied. They would gain all the good of the earth ; at last, even this is not enough. With years life grows broader, and our views of life. To the child, the flower and the colored stone become too little ; to the man and woman, the enjoyment of all honor, all wealth, indifferent ; the earth has too little for the spirit—it stretches out its arms into the universe—it demands and it receives eternity.”

These were the words which the respected father of Adela said to us, on his death-bed. We wept as we

stood over the departed, but we loved him with a still more earnest, holy love, which sanctified ourselves. Adela and I lived a higher life, since there was no barrier between us and eternity, and we had something to love there as here.

The purest of all joys comes to us from our children. I accompanied my eldest son to the University ; and it was the most agreeable surprise to Adela and myself, when I received, on my fiftieth birthday, the royal appointment to the easy and honorable office which I now hold. This office made it necessary for me to live in the city ; and from there to the University, where my son was pursuing his studies, was only a moderate day's ride. We were together as often as we wished.

Adela, indeed, left with regret her native city ; but of the court residence she had heard often, and it had a charm for her maternal heart in its proximity to her first-born son. She was in her fortieth year—no longer the ideal beauty which I thought her, when, at our first meeting, I saw her beside me in the carriage ; but her features had acquired more exalted charms, her form had added dignity to grace. The heart of Adela had retained its youth. I loved her with the first love. Her lovely face, distorted by no passion in her youth, needed no false coloring to make it charming.

She knew my early relations with Augustina, and when we came to the city, she was very curious to become acquainted with my first love.

Three or four months passed away before I visited

Madame Von Winter, for I felt little inclination to do so. We were told she no longer received company, that she lived extremely retired, and had become in her later years as avaricious as she had before been extravagant. This change of feeling might be considered as a consequence of her passion for gaming, to which she gave herself up, when she was no longer young enough for gallantry. She was most frequently found at mass, for, some years before, excited by the romantic poets of the fashionable school, she had thrown herself into the bosom of the only true church, and had become a catholic.

When I visited her now for the first time, I was conducted again into the garden. As I passed through the house, I had seen pictures of the saints hanging on the dusty walls. The garden was like a wilderness, and thorns grew where Augustina and I had once enjoyed the marriage feast. The acacias had been cut down, out of economy, to make firewood. The Chinese temple had lost all its outward ornaments, and was covered with honest Dutch tiles; little pointed gothic windows of colored glass, like the church windows of the times of romance, and a cross on the top of the roof, made the house resemble a little chapel.

And so it was. As I entered, I saw an altar, a crucifix, and an eternal lamp. Madame Winter, fifty years old, clad in a very simple matronly dress, just arisen from her devotions, came to meet me, her rosary in her hand, and the murmur of a prayer on her lips.

I stood still before her. She knew me and seemed pleased. I could not conquer my feelings, but without moving I took her hand, and with moistened eyes pointed to the chapel. "Ah, Augustina," cried I, "when the light vine-bower stood here—when we in happy childhood exchanged our pewter rings—when, ten years after, lover and beloved, we gave and received the first kiss of our innocent love, and vowed before heaven"—

"I beseech you, think no more of such vain children's play," interrupted she.

"Ah, Augustina, it was not well to change the simple vine-bower into the splendid boudoir; still worse that I should see the golden ring of love thrown away at the faro-table; and now a chapel!"

"Sir," said Madame Winter, "we are cured at last of the intoxication of the world and its vain pleasures. You wound my heart by such recollections. If your salvation is dear to you, follow my example, learn to forsake a false world, and call upon the saint's in heaven for their intercession."

When I returned home, I said to Adela, "No, dearest, we will not go to see her. I no longer know her. She has become a bigoted devotee. Oh, all-powerful Time!"

JOSEPHINE.

THOU, who didst seem in youth to be
Sustained alike through good or ill,
By star, or fate, or destiny,
That told thee of a triumph still!

While the great hope of future good
Dispelled the dreary prison's gloom,
Was there no warning understood
Of evil also in thy doom?

Could not the voice that had such power,
To bring thee dreams of future fame,
Prepare thee for that after hour,
Of deep disgrace and bitter shame?

Did not the glass, where thou couldst see
The crownèd queen, and honored wife,
E'er show thee, in sad prophecy,
Thy worse than widowed close of life?

Alas! alas! thy future shows
How vain are hope's delusive gleams—
True wisdom never comes to those,
Who trust in sorceries and dreams.

No knowledge can avail but this,
Of all men ever learned or heard,
To know God's will and promises
And knowing, take him at his word

Yet in thy darkest hour of shame,
Whate'er thy sins and follies past,
Who would not pity more than blame,
And weep above thy fall at last.

Yea, weep for thee, that heavy day,
Thou stoodst aside, uncheered, alone,
That Austria's beauty might have way
To pass unhindered to the throne.

Yet lo! how surely future years,
Avenge the evils of the past,
For all thy sorrows, and thy tears,
Thou surely art repaid, at last.

And he who hoped by wrong like this,
To gain a good for future years,
Has shown how less than foolishness
Man's wisdom in the end appears.

No farther than the meanest may,
Could pierce that proud and kingly glance
Thy royal son, not his to day,
Wears the imperial crown of France.

MADAME DE SÉVIGNE.

BY ALEXANDER H. EVERETT.

It is remarkable that many of the best books, of all sorts, have been written by persons, who, at the time of writing them, had no intention of becoming authors. Indeed, with a slight inclination to systematize and exaggerate, one might be almost tempted to maintain the position—however paradoxical it may at first blush appear—that no good book can be written in any other way ; that the only literature of any value, is that which grows indirectly out of the real action of society, intended directly to effect some other purpose ; and that when a man sits down doggedly in his study, and says to himself, “ I mean to write a good book,” it is certain, from the necessity of the case, that the result will be a bad one.

To illustrate this by a few examples : Shakspeare, the Greek Dramatists, Lope and Calderon, Corneille, Racine, and Molière—in short, all the dramatic poets of much celebrity, prepared their works for actual representation, at times when the drama was the

favorite amusement. Their plays, when collected, make excellent books. At a later period, when the drama had in a great measure gone out of fashion, Lord Byron, a man not inferior, perhaps, in poetical genius to any of the persons just mentioned, undertakes—without any view to the stage—to write a book of the same kind. What is the result? Something which, as Ninon de l'Enclos said of the young Marquis de Sévigné, has very much the character of *fricasseed snow*. Homer, again, or the Homerites—a troop of wandering minstrels—composed, probably without putting them to paper, certain songs and ballads, which they sung at the tables of the warriors and princes of their time. Some centuries afterwards, Pisistratus made them up into a book, which became the bible of Greece. Voltaire, whose genius perhaps was equal to that of any of the Homerites, attempted in cold blood to make just such a book; and here again the product—called the *Henriade*—is no book, but another lump of *fricasseed snow*. What are all your pretended histories? Fables, jest books, satires, apologies, anything but what they profess to be. Bring together the correspondence of a distinguished public character—a Washington, a Wellington—and then, for the first time, you have a real history. Even in so small a matter as a common letter to a friend, if you write one for the sake of writing it, in order to produce a good letter as such, you will probably fail. Who ever read one of Pliny's precious specimens of affectation and formality, without wishing that

he had perished in the same eruption of Vesuvius that destroyed his uncle? On the contrary, let one who has anything to say to another at a distance, in the way of either business or friendship, commit his thoughts to paper, merely for the purpose of communicating them, and he will not only effect his immediate object, but, however humble may be his literary pretensions, will commonly write something that may be read with pleasure by an indifferent third person. In short, experience seems to show that every book, prepared with a view to mere book-making, is necessarily a sort of counterfeit, bearing the same relation to a real book, which the juggling of the Egyptian magicians did to the miracles of Moses.

But not to push these ideas to extravagance, it may be sufficient for the present purpose to say that Madame de Sévigné, without intending to become an author, has, in fact, produced one of the most agreeable and really valuable books that have ever been written. Her letters are not sermons, or essays in disguise, but were composed, without any view to publication, for the purpose of talking on paper to a beloved daughter, with whom the writer had in a manner identified her existence. They are, therefore, a genuine thing of their kind, and besides answering the purpose for which they were originally written, may be expected, as was just now remarked, to possess an accidental value for the public, which will be greater or less according to the character of the writer. In the pre

sent case, this accidental value is very high, in consequence of the extraordinary merit and talent of Madame de Sévigné, and the elevated sphere in which she moved. It has been justly observed by Madame de Staël, that the private life of almost every individual, properly treated, would furnish materials for an interesting romance. It is easy to imagine, therefore, that a collection of letters, covering the period of half a century in the domestic history of one of the most distinguished and accomplished families in France—written throughout in a manner which is admitted by all to be the perfection of the epistolary style—must have the charm of a first-rate novel. But, in addition to this, they have another value, of a perfectly distinct, if not much higher kind, as a picture by a master-hand of one of the most brilliant periods in the history of civilization. Madame de Sévigné was placed by birth and marriage in the highest circles of the Court of Louis XIV., and maintained a constant personal intercourse, more or less intimate, with all the prominent political men from the king downwards. Her superior intellect and literary tastes and habits also gave her an interest in the current literature. The popular authors and their books are among her regular topics. These new books, of which she notices the publication and first effect, are no other than the acknowledged master-pieces of modern art; their authors are Corneille, Racine, Molière and La Fontaine, De Retz and La Rochefoucault, Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Fléchier and Massillon.

Again ; her fascinating manners and splendid conversational powers—for she seemed to have excelled as much in conversation as in writing—rendered her a universal favorite, and the life of every circle in which she appeared. She is constantly surrounded—abroad and at home, in town or in the country—by the most interesting portion of the refined and cultivated classes. Thus, the varied and brilliant panorama, exhibited at the Court of Versailles during the reign of Louis XIV., is reflected in her letters with a perfect truth to nature, and a magical grace, vivacity, and elegance of style. Finally, these remarkable letters derive their last and highest charm from the excellent and moral tone that pervades the whole collection. Living in a society where licentiousness had ceased to be regarded as criminal, and was countenanced by the almost universal practice of the court, Madame de Sévigné, though continually wrought upon by influences of the most seductive kind, maintained the purity of her personal character unsullied by blemish or suspicion. At a time when there was, generally speaking, no medium in the circles in which she moved, between the avowed voluptuary and the ascetic, she avoided both extremes ; and following with firmness, or rather without any apparent effort, the impulse of a naturally sound judgment and affectionate heart, united a sincere interest in religion and a scrupulously correct course of practical conduct with a cheerful and genuine enjoyment of life. She habitually read, thought, and conversed on religious

subjects, and often makes them the topic of her letters. She hangs with rapture upon the lips of the great pulpit orators, Bossuet, Fléchier. and particularly Bourdaloue, who seems to be her especial favorite. She has even at times a slight leaning towards a severe system of morals, from her strong attachment to *Messieurs de Port-Royal*, whose works she regularly devours as they come out ; and she now and then pleasantly laments that she cannot be a *dévôte* that is, that she cannot make up her mind to retire into a convent and give herself up to religious exercises, meditation and solitude. In these regrets, however, as may well be supposed, she is not more than half in earnest. Her good sense and cheerful temper prevent her from yielding to these momentary impulses, sustain her steadily in a uniform line of conduct through a life of threescore and ten years, diversified by many painful scenes, and shed a sunny glow over her whole correspondence. Her pictures of life have none of the false coloring, sometimes called *romantic*, and yet we know no book that leaves upon the mind a more agreeable impression of the character of the author and of human nature in general. We see that here are real men and women, fashioned, in all respects, as we are, and provided with an ample allowance of faults and weaknesses, but of whom the better portion sincerely love one another, and cheerfully make sacrifices for each other's welfare ; this is the true, and, for that reason, the most improv-

ing and edifying as well as the most attractive view of human life.

Carlyle, in his review of Boswell's *Johnson*, represents that work as the best that was published in England during the last century. Madame de Sévigné is a sort of French Boswell; and without going, in regard to her, to the full length of Carlyle's rather extravagant eulogy upon the *Johnsoniad*, as he calls it, we can say with truth that we hardly know any French literary work of the last century for which we would exchange her letters. In reality, however, the letters, though published during the last century, belong to the preceding one by character, as well as date; and display the vigor of thought, and the pure taste in style, which characterized the period of Louis XIV., and of which we find so few traces even in the best French productions of subsequent times. It is amusing to remark the complete contrast, in other respects, between two works of which the general scope and object coincide so nearly as those of Boswell and Madame de Sévigné. The stolid, blundering, drunken, self-sufficiency of poor Bozzy, united ridiculously enough with a most grovelling subserviency to the literary leviathan whom he had made his idol, sets off in high relief the airy though finished elegance of the *bellissima Madre*, and the graceful ease with which she handles every subject and character that comes in her way. The narrative form adopted by Boswell, and the entire sacrifice of all the other char-

acters to the redoubtable Doctor, increase the unity and with it the interest of the work ; but, for the same reason, they make it, what it indeed professes to be, a biographical rather than a historical one. In the letters of Madame de Sévigné, the characters all appear in their just proportions ; the vast canvas is not the portrait of an individual, but the panorama of an age.

These letters are so perfect in their kind that the good-natured generation of critics have been rather at a loss to know how to find fault with them. The only objection that has ever been made to the style, is, that the writer uses, perhaps half a dozen times in her twelve volumes, two or three words, which, though considered polite in her time, are now obsolete. As regards the substance, there is no unfavorable judgment of much authority, excepting that of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who pronounces the letters to be mere *tittle-tattle*, and the author something between a fine lady and an *old nurse*. When will rival wits and belles learn to do each other justice ? Without disparagement to her ladyship's taste and judgment, we incline to the opinion that the *tittle-tattle* of circles in which Condé and Corneille conversed with Louis XIV., Turenne, Bossuet, Pascal, Fenelon and Sévigné, will be thought, hereafter, at least as interesting as descriptions of Turkish manners and scenery, agreeable as these, from the elegant pen of Lady Mary, undoubtedly are.

Madame de Sévigné belonged to the noble family of Rabutin-Chantal, and was born in 1626. Her grandmother, the Baroness of Chantal, was a person of extraordinary piety. She instituted the order of *Sisters of the Visitation*, of which she established eighty-four convents in France. In the year 1767, she was canonized by Pope Clement XIV., as one of the saints of the Catholic church. Her son, and Madame de Sévigné's father, Baron Chantal, though essentially, as it appears, a good-natured person, seems to have practised a singular frankness in his epistolary style, at least if we may judge from a specimen which is preserved in the letters of his daughter. On the elevation of Mr. de Schomberg to the dignity of Marshal of France, Chantal addressed him in the following laconic letter :

“ *Monseigneur—*

“ *Qualité : Barbe noire : familière.*

“ CHANTAL.”

In this rather enigmatical dispatch, the Baron is understood to have intended to reproach his correspondent with being indebted for his promotion to his high birth, his beard, which was black like that of Louis XIII., and his personal acquaintance with the king. Baron Chantal commanded the French forces, which were stationed at the Isle of Rhé to repulse the attack of the English under the Duke of Buckingham, in 1627. On this occasion he sustained himself hero-

ically for six hours in succession, had three horses killed under him, and received twenty-seven wounds—the last, as is said, from the hand of Oliver Cromwell, which proved fatal. His widow died in 1632, leaving their only daughter, afterwards Madame de Sévigné, an orphan, six years old. She owed her education chiefly to her uncle, the Abbé de Livry, of the Coulanges family, who took a paternal care of her through life, and left her his property. He lived to an advanced age, and figures constantly in the letters under the title of *le bien bon*.

Mademoiselle de Chautal was presented at the court of Louis XIII., at the age of about seventeen. At this time she is described as having been remarkably handsome. She was of middling stature, with a good person, a profusion of light colored hair, an uncommonly fresh and brilliant complexion, indicating luxuriant health, a musical voice, a lively and agreeable manner, and a more than ordinary skill in the elegant accomplishments that belong to a finished education. Her cousin, the notorious Count de Bussy-Rabutin, in a sort of satirical portrait of her, written in a fit of ill-humor, amused himself at the expense of her square nose and parti-colored eyelashes, to which she occasionally alludes herself in her letters. Bussy, however, in his better moods, does justice to her appearance, as well as character, and repeatedly pronounces her, in his letters, the handsomest woman in France. Her beauty, which seems to have depended

on her health and a happy temperament, rather than a mere regularity of features, improved with age, and she retained to a very late period of life the titles of *bellissima Madre*, and the Mother Beauty (*mère beauté*), which were conferred upon her by her cousin Coulanges, and confirmed by the general voice of the society in which she lived. The year following her appearance at Court she married the Marquis de Sévigné, who was killed in a duel six years later, leaving her a wealthy and attractive widow, of about four-and-twenty, at a court where, as has been already remarked, licentiousness was nearly universal, and where the women of fashion passed, almost without exception, through the two periods of gallantry in early life, and ascetic devotion after the age of pleasure was over. It is no slight merit in Madame de Sévigné, considering the circumstances, that she steered clear of both these opposite excesses, and stood by general acknowledgment above suspicion. This is fairly admitted even by her enemies, or rather enemy, for her cousin Bussy was the only person who ever openly found fault with her. In order to have some apology for refusing her the credit she deserves, he ascribes her correct conduct to coldness of temperament, as if every line of her correspondence did not prove that her heart was overflowing with kindness, and that she was habitually under the influence of impulse, quite as much as of calculation. No better proof of this will be wanted, at least by the ultra-prudent generation of New Eng-

land parents, than that she sacrificed a great part of her large fortune in establishing her son and daughter, and found herself, in her later years, reduced to comparatively quite narrow circumstances. It was her felicity, or rather her merit, that her affections, strong as they were, flowed in healthy and natural channels, instead of wasting themselves on forbidden objects. The evident ill-humor with which Lady M. W. Montagu speaks of her and her writings, was probably owing, in part, to a consciousness of the great superiority in this respect of the character of Madame de Sévigné to her own.

Madame de Sévigné not only kept herself aloof from the almost universal licentiousness of her time, but steadily refused all offers of marriage, and devoted herself with exemplary assiduity to the education of her two children, a son and daughter. The latter is the person to whom the greater part of the letters are addressed. The same authorities which represent the mother as the handsomest woman in France, describe the daughter as the handsomest young lady (*la plus jolie fille*). She was married at eighteen to the Count de Grignan, a nobleman of high consideration and apparently excellent character, who was called on soon after to act as governor of Provence. His lady naturally accompanied him, and the separation that took place in consequence between the mother and daughter, was the immediate cause of the correspondence, which has given them both, and particularly the former, so extensive a celebrity. After a few detached letters of

an earlier date, the principal series commences with the departure of Madame de Grignan for Provence, and is kept up at very short intervals—excepting when the parties were occasionally together, sometimes for years in succession—through the whole life of Madame de Sévigné ; who, at the age of seventy, died at her daughter's residence, of small pox, brought on by excessive care and fatigue in attending upon this beloved child through a severe and protracted illness of several months :—thus, finally sacrificing her life to the strong maternal love, to which she had already sacrificed her fortune, and which had been the absorbing passion and principal source of happiness of all her riper years. This deeply affecting catastrophe crowns with a sort of poetical consistency, the beautiful and touching romance of real life, which it brings to a close.

The letters, considered merely as a sketch of the private adventures of the parties, revolve round the circle of incidents, which made up, at that time, the history of every family of the same class. The son's achievements in the wars—the marriage of the daughter—her health and the birth of her children—her husband's affairs, which became embarrassed from the necessity of keeping up an immense household as governor of Provence, without any adequate allowance from the King to cover the expense—the establishment of her daughter's children—together with the adventures of other more remote branches of the family, compose the outline of the plot, which is of course simple

enough. The characters of the corresponding parties, and their immediate connections, are also, with the exception of Madame de Sévigné herself, rather common place. The son, who was placed at great expense to his mother in the army, seems to have made little or no figure, and retired early to a life of inactivity. The daughter, Madame de Grignan, in the few of her letters which are preserved, says nothing to justify the unbounded admiration with which she is constantly spoken of by her mother, and the whole family circle. Count de Bussy is an original, but of an unpleasant kind, and is never entertaining, excepting when he makes himself ridiculous, which happens rather often. The Coulanges are mere votaries of fashion, and so of the rest. But the test of genius, as need hardly be said, is, *proprie communia dicere*—to produce great effects with common materials—to tell the story of life, as it really passes, in a lively, original and entertaining way. The brilliant imagination and magical pen of Madame de Sévigné threw an air of novelty over all these every-day characters and incidents, and we follow the development of their fortunes with an interest that never flags through the whole twelve volumes.

At the present day, however, these letters, though highly agreeable as a picture of domestic life in France at the period when they were written, are, from the extraordinary importance of that period, still more valuable, as a record of contemporary events and characters. It may be amusing to the reader to cast a

glance—of course exceedingly rapid and cursory—over some of the scenes that are successively brought before the eye in traversing this long and well-stored gallery.

The collection opens with two or three letters to Ménage, a sort of pedant, who then enjoyed the reputation of a wit. He had some share in the education of Madame de Sévigné and seems to have availed himself of the occasion to fall in love with her. He is quietly taught to keep his distance, and, taking the hint, soon retires into silence and we hear no more of him.

The next personage that occupies the stage is the eccentric cousin, Bussy-Rabutin, now in the full flow of youthful impertinence and self-sufficiency, sowing his wild oats with a profuse hand in all quarters. The great Turenne, who combined with transcendent military talents, an almost childish simplicity of character, could, nevertheless, at times say a good thing, and one day informed the King that Bussy was the best officer in the army—at a song. The King pretty soon had occasion to know by experience the extent of Bussy's talent in this way, the latter having in one of his ballads, introduced the following highly complimentary epigram upon Louis XIV. and Madame de la Vallière—who, it appears, had a rather wide mouth :

“ Que Deodatus* est heureux
De baiser ce bec amoureux,
Que d'une oreille à l'autre va
Halleluia ! ”

* Deodatus (Dieu-donné) was one of the names of Louis XIV.

“What a fortunate man is our gracious sovereign in being permitted to salute a mouth that stretches so invitingly from ear to ear !” The epigram, which is, after all, none of the best, cost poor Bussy pretty dear. Louis, though not very intolerant in similar cases, thought this a little *too bad*, or was, perhaps, set on by the lady, who was probably not much gratified by seeing the longitude of her mouth so nicely calculated, and sent Bussy to the Bastile. After doing penance there for a few months, he was permitted to retire to his estates, where he remained an exile from the Court for the rest of his life. He appears, from time to time, through the whole course of the letters, affecting much philosophy and resignation, but always engaged in some new effort to recover the King’s favor. It is not very easy, however, for a singed moth to get back his wings. All these efforts successively failed, and Bussy died at an advanced age, as he had lived, in exile. Madame de Sévigné never entirely forgave him for his wanton and malignant attack upon her in the portrait. She receives his apologies, though conceived in the most fulsome strain of flattery and devotion, for a time with bitterness ; and though at length apparently softened, maintains a constrained and formal tone in her correspondence with him to the last.

The personage next in order is one of higher political importance, the celebrated Superintendent Fouquet, the Wolsey of France. His history is well known. The immense fortune, which he had amassed in the exercise

of his office, and the ostentatious display which he made of it, were the real causes of his ruin. He had assumed for his arms a squirrel, pursued by a snake, which was the device of Colbert, with the motto, *Quò non ascendam?* This was emblazoned in every form upon the walls and furniture of his splendid residence at Vaux le Vicomte. The picture was prophetic of his fortune. The wily enemy was too successful in the pursuit of his indiscreet prey. Colbert, a statesman much superior in conduct to Fouquet, and the Secretary of State, Le Tellier, afterwards Marquis de Louvois, roused the jealousy of the King by representations of the inordinate wealth of the Superintendent. Shortly after an entertainment which he had given to the King and Court at Vaux, and which had exceeded in magnificence anything of the kind ever known in France, he was arrested, and his papers were seized. Among these was unfortunately found the draft of some plot against Cardinal Mazarin, formed many years before during the ministry of Louis XIV., when the different members of the royal family were at war with each other, and when it was rather difficult for any one to say what the government was, or who was in possession of it. This project, which had never been acted on, had lain forgotten among the papers of Fouquet, and was now made the pretext of his ruin. After having been kept in confinement three years, he was tried for his life by a special commission, as the author of the paper alluded to. The Court made the strongest efforts to procure a

sentence of death, but could only obtain one of perpetual banishment, which the King commuted into the severer one of imprisonment for life. The fate of Fouquet, who seems to have been a vain, ambitious and corrupt man, now excites little sympathy ; but the means employed to bring it about were not very creditable to the character of Louis. The Superintendent had made himself a general favorite by his profuse liberality, and his patronage of the arts, in consequence of which, and of the manifest injustice of the proceedings against him, his case called forth at the time much commiseration among the better part of society. Turenne, in particular, took a strong interest in his favor. One day, when some one was commending in his presence the moderation of Le Tellier, and blaming the violence of Colbert : "Why, yes," replied Turenne, "Colbert is rather more eager to get him hung than Le Tellier, but Le Tellier is much more afraid that he will escape than Colbert."

Madame de Sévigné had been on friendly terms with Fouquet, and had written him some letters during his prosperity. They were found among his papers, and without throwing any imputation upon her character, made known to the Court, for the first time, the graces of her epistolary style. She was present at the trial of Fouquet, and gives in several letters a minute and highly interesting account of the proceedings. Fouquet passed a number of years in close confinement in the fortress of Pignerol ; was finally released on account of

the bad state of his health, and died a few months after his liberation.

The death of Turenne furnishes Madame de Sévigné with a subject for several of her finest letters. This great commander was killed nearly in the same way with General Moreau. He was at the head of the French army in the campaign of 1675 ; and was proceeding, one day after dinner, to examine from an eminence the position of the enemy, who were retreating before him. He had with him a large suite, including his nephew, the Count d'Elbeuf, Count Hamilton, and M. de St. Hilaire. As he approached the eminence, he said to M. d'Elbeuf, " You are too near me, nephew You will make me known to the enemy." Immediately after, Count Hamilton said to him, " Come this way, sir, they are firing on the point where you are." To which Turenne replied, " You are right. I should not like to be killed to-day, when matters are going on so well." He had scarcely turned his horse when St. Hilaire came up to him, hat in hand, and begged him to take a look at a battery which he had just been constructing, a little in the other direction. Turenne returned, and at the same moment a ball, which also carried away the arm of St. Hilaire, struck him in the body. His horse started at the shock, and conveyed the rider back to the place where he had left his nephew. The hero had not yet fallen, but was bowed down upon his horse's neck, and when the animal stopped, sank into the arms of the attendants, convulsively

opened his eyes and mouth two or three times, and then expired. The ball had carried away a portion of his heart.

Funeral orations were delivered in honor of Turenne by the great pulpit orators, Mascaron and Fléchier, upon both of which we have commentaries from Madame de Sévigné. The former seems to have attracted rather more of her attention than the latter; and this preference has been considered as a proof of bad taste, but was probably owing to the circumstance, that she did not hear the oration of Fléchier, having been at the time ill in the country. In general, as we said before, she speaks frequently of the pulpit orators, particularly Bourdaloue. The effect of his eloquence upon his audiences seems to have been very great. One day, while he was delivering a sermon, the Marshal de Grammont was so much struck with the truth of a particular passage, that he expressed his approbation aloud, on the spot, in the not very edifying ejaculation, *Mon Dieu, il a raison!* The princesses, who were present, burst into a loud fit of laughter, and it was some time before order could be restored.

Madame de Sévigné does full justice on various occasions to Bossuet. The magnificent funeral oration which he delivered upon the great Condé, beginning with the well-known *Dieu seul est grand*, contains a parallel between Condé and Turenne, which did not, at the time, give entire satisfaction to the Court. As Condé was a prince of the blood royal, it was thought

rather indecorous that any mere nobleman, however elevated in rank, (and Turenne was himself a prince), should be brought into competition with him. Count de Grammont, a nephew of the Marshal, said to the King after hearing Bossuet, that he had been listening to the funeral oration of M. de Turenne ; and Madame de Sévigné herself remarks that M. de Meaux, in comparing *without necessity* these two great captains, gave credit to Condé for talent and good fortune, but allowed to Turenne the higher praise of prudence and good conduct. This brilliant aristocracy little thought, at the time, how soon a Corsican adventurer, with very doubtful pretensions to nobility of any kind, was to seat himself in triumph on the throne of St. Louis.

Louis XIV. figures frequently in the letters, and, to do him justice, makes a good figure wherever he appears. Like his contemporary and pensioner, Charles II., he possessed the *à propos* in discourse, and a remarkable happiness in repartee. Thus, when he was taking leave of the unfortunate James II., at his departure for Ireland on the expedition for the recovery of his crown, he said to him, "I shall always be proud and happy to receive your majesty in my kingdom, but the greatest compliment that I can pay you at parting is to wish that I may never see you again." When the Marquis of Uxelles, who after a gallant defence had been compelled by want of powder and provisions to surrender the fortress of Mentz, returned to Paris, he was

hissed, on his first appearance in the theatre. The King, by way of compensation, received him at Court with great favor, and said to him, "Sir, you defended your post like a man of spirit, and surrendered like a man of sense." One day at the King's Levée, the conversation turning upon the loss of a recent battle by the Marshal de Créquy, some one of the courtiers inquired of his majesty why the Marshal fought this battle? "Your question," said the King, in reply, "reminds me of a similar one, which was addressed to the famous Duke of Saxe-Weimar, during the thirty years' war, by a veteran officer in a blue riband named Parabère: "You ask me why I fought the battle," said Weimar in reply, "why, sir, I fought it because I thought I should win it;" and then turning to one of his aids, "Pray," said he, in a voice loud enough to be heard by the circle, "who is this old fool in the blue riband?" Bourdaloue in his sermons lashed the licentiousness of the Court at times with a good deal of freedom. On one of these occasions the courtiers made some complaint to the King. "Gentlemen," said he, in answer, "Bourdaloue has done his duty; it remains for us to do ours, and I wish we may succeed as well." At another time Massillon had been preaching upon the conflict between the flesh and the spirit, described by St. Paul, which he represented figuratively as an internal struggle between two persons contending for the mastery. The King went forward to meet him as he descended from the pul-

pit, and, taking him by the hand, said to him, "*Ah, mon père ! que je connais bien ces deux-hommes là !*"—Ah, my good father ! I, for one, am but too well acquainted with the two gentlemen you have been speaking of !

In the satirical portrait of Madame de Sévigné by her cousin, Count de Bussy, which has been alluded to, he charges her with being too much dazzled by the pageantry of the Court, and too much elated by any little personal attention from the King or Queen. "One evening," says he, "after the King had been dancing a minuet with her, on resuming her seat, which was by my side, she remarked, "Well, cousin, it must be owned that the King has great qualities ; I think he will eclipse the glory of all his predecessors." I could not," says Bussy, "help laughing in her face at the singularity of the *à propos*, and replied, "After the proof of heroism which he has just given in dancing with you, my fair cousin, there can be no doubt about it." She was on the point," adds Bussy, "of crying out *Vive le Roi*, before the whole company."

There would be no great harm in all this, if it were literally true ; but as Bussy afterwards disavowed and retracted the whole portrait, it is, of course, unnecessary to attach any importance to this passage. There is no appearance in the letters of excessive admiration of the King. The tone, whenever he is mentioned, is evidently guarded, probably from an apprehension that all letters passing through the post-office were subject to inspection ; but the language

though commonly laudatory, does not exceed the bounds of moderation and justice, for Louis XIV., did, in fact, possess great qualities, combined with some great weaknesses, and did eclipse the glory of most of his predecessors. Madame de Sévigné repeatedly gives her opinion, in pretty plain terms, upon the insane passion for war, which was the prominent vice in his character; and, when she praises him, generally does it with discrimination. She commends particularly, on several occasions, his felicity in reply, and the correctness of taste with which he kept up the decorum of his station, or, as the Empress Catherine would have said, enacted the part of king.

The chapter of the King's mistresses is treated in the letters with great discretion; a fact which alone is sufficient to refute Lady M. W. Montagu's charge of tittle-tattle, since a lover of mere gossip would have made this topic the principal one throughout the whole correspondence. It is touched upon by Madame de Sévigné very sparingly, and always in the most proper manner. She seems to have had no personal acquaintance with any of the King's successive favorites, excepting Madame de Maintenon, to whom he was privately married. With her Madame de Sévigné had been somewhat intimate in earlier life, and sometimes visited her after her marriage to the King. Madame de Montespan is occasionally mentioned, and also Mademoiselle de

Fontanges, who was much more remarkable for beauty than wit. "The Fontanges," said Madame, "though her hair is rather red, is beautiful from head to foot; it is impossible to see anything prettier, and she is, withal, the best creature in the world; but she has no more wit than a kitten." The Abbé de Choisy said of her that she was as "handsome as an angel, and as silly as a basket"—(*belle comme un ange, et sotte comme un panier*). The latter similitude is new to us; we have sometimes heard a smiling face compared to a basket of chips.

Among the ladies of the court out of her own family, Madame de la Fayette seems to have been the most intimate companion of Madame de Sévigné. She was one of the ancestors of the distinguished friend of America, and was celebrated in her day as the author of several very popular novels. She was one of the first modern writers of fiction who had the good taste to rely for effect on the use of natural incidents and characters. Her *Princess of Cleves* forms the transition from the romance of chivalry to the modern novel, which is intended as a picture of real life. Madame de Cornuel is often mentioned as the wit of the circle. Several of her *bons mots* are quoted, which, however, in general, are not very marvellous; one of the best, and that is merely a play on words, was occasioned by a negotiation between the King and the Pope, which was expected to terminate in the publication of certain papal bulls. While the matter

was in progress, the Abbé de Polignac arrived at Paris from Rome, bearing the despatches which it was generally thought must be the wished-for documents, but which proved to be merely preliminary articles. "*Ce ne sont pas des bulles qu'il apporte,*" said Madame de Cornuel, "*mais des préambules.*"

The men of wit and letters constituted the favorite society of Madame de Sévigné, and of these she was particularly intimate with the Duke de la Rochefoucault, Cardinal de Retz, and the Abbé Arnauld. Among the poets her passion was for Corneille, whom she praises throughout the letters in the most exalted terms, and quotes upon all occasions. She preferred him to Racine, and is reported to have said—though the remark does not appear in her letters—that the taste for Racine was a mere whim, which would pass away, like the taste for coffee. Both have now stood the test of nearly two centuries, and seem to be gaining rather than losing ground in the public favor. Madame de Sévigné herself, at a later period, became more just to the merit of Racine, and after witnessing the representation of his Esther at Court, speaks of it in terms that must satisfy his warmest admirers. Her account of this affair is, perhaps, as agreeable a specimen as can be given of her letters :

"We went to St. Cyr on Saturday—Madame de Coulanges, Madame de Bagnols, the Abbé Tita, and myself. On arriving, we found that places had been

kept for us. An attendant told Madame de Coulanges, that Madame de Maintenon had ordered a seat to be reserved for her next to herself. Think what an honor! 'As for you, madame,' said he to me, 'take your choice.' I placed myself with Madame de Bagnols on the second bench behind the duchesses. Marshal Bellefonte came and took a seat by my side. We listened to the piece with an attention that was remarked, and occasionally threw in, in a low tone, some complimentary expressions, which could not perhaps have been hatched under the *fontanges** of all the ladies present. I can give you no idea of the extreme beauty of the piece. It is something which cannot be described, and can never be imitated. It is a combination of music, poetry, song and character, so complete and perfect, that it leaves nothing to be wished. The young ladies, who act the kings and great men, seem to have been made on purpose for their parts. The attention is fixed, and no other regret is felt than that so charming a piece should ever come to an end. It is throughout at once simple, innocent, touching and sublime. The plot agrees entirely with the Scripture narrative; the choruses, of which the words are borrowed from the Psalms and the Wisdom of Solomon, are so exquisitely beautiful, that they cannot be heard without tears. I was perfectly charmed, and so was the Marshal, who,

* Madame de Fontanges had given her name to a particular head-dress.

leaving his place, went and told the King how much he was delighted, and that he had been sitting by the side of just such a lady as ought to be present at a representation of Esther. The King then came up to me and said, 'I understand, madame, that you have been pleased.' I replied without confusion, 'Sire, I have been charmed. I cannot tell you how much I have been delighted.' 'Racine,' replied the king, 'has certainly a great deal of talent.' 'That he has, sire,' said I; 'and these young ladies have certainly a great deal, too. They play their parts as if they had never done anything else.' 'It is true enough,' replied the King. His majesty then retired, leaving me an object of general envy. As I was almost the only person who had not been present at any preceding representation, the King was probably pleased with my sincere, though quiet expressions of satisfaction. The prince and princess came to say a word to me; Madame de Maintenon gave me a look as she retired with the King. I was ready with answers to every one, for I was in good luck. We retired in the evening by torch-light, and supped with Madame de Coulanges, to whom the King had also spoken with great familiarity and kindness. I saw the chevalier, and gave him an account of my little success, for I see no necessity for making a mystery of these things, as some persons do. He was highly gratified. So there you have my whole story. Mr. de Meaux (Bossuet) talked to me a great deal about

you, and so did the Prince (Condé). I regret that you were not present, but we cannot be in two places at the same time."

This is certainly very pleasant *tittle-tattle*. On fit occasions Madame de Sévigné can discourse in a higher and more serious mood. Her letters to M. de Coulanges on the death of the Minister Louvois is an example :

"I am so much shocked by the sudden death of M. de Louvois, that I hardly know what to say of it. He is dead, then!—the great minister—the powerful man—who held so high a place—whose *moi*, as M. Nicole says, was so widely expanded—who was the centre of so many interests. How much business has he not left unsettled! How many plans and projects but half executed! How many webs of secret intrigue to be unravelled! How many wars just begun to be brought to a close! How many moves still to be made upon the great political chess-board! In vain he begs for a short respite: 'Oh, my God, allow me a little more time; let me only say *check* to the Duke of Savoy, and *mate* to the Prince of Orange.' 'No, no—you shall not have a moment—not a single moment.' Is it possible to talk on such matters? Alas, no! we must reflect upon them in the silence of the closet. This is the second minister that has died since you went to Rome, both bound by a hundred mil

lion ties to the world : how unlike their characters ! and yet how similar their fates !

“ As to your faith in religion, which you say is shaken by what you see going on around you at Rome, permit me to tell you, my dear cousin, that you are altogether wrong. I have heard a person of the best judgment draw a directly opposite conclusion from what passes in that city at the election of a pope.* He was satisfied that the Christian religion must be of divine origin to be able to sustain itself in the midst of so many disorders. This, my dear cousin, is the proper view of the subject. Recollect how often this very city has been bathed in the blood of the martyrs. That in the earlier ages of the church, the intrigues of the conclave always terminated in electing from among the priests the one who appeared to have the greatest share of fortitude and zeal in the cause. That thirty-seven popes, undismayed by the certainty of martyrdom, and that in the most cruel form, accepted the place, and were conducted successively to the stake. If you will only read the history of the church, you must be satisfied that a religion which was established and continues to subsist by a perpetual miracle, cannot be a mere imagination of men. Men do not imagine in this way. Read St. Augustine’s *Truth of Religion* ; read Abbadie—inferior, it is true, to the great saint, but not unworthy to be brought into comparison with him. Ask the Abbé de Polignac, by the by, how he likes

Abbie. But, my dear cousin, let me beg of you to collect your ideas on this great subject, and not to permit yourself to be led away so lightly into false conclusions."

We call this pretty good sermonizing for a lady. There is a great deal more to the same effect in different parts of the letters. It will be remarked that there is here nothing of the bigotry to particular forms and phrases, which constitutes the religion of so many persons. Madame de Sévigné sees and acknowledges to corruptions existing, not merely in other forms of religion, but in that to which she was herself by birth and education attached. Her correspondent Coulanges, who, like his cousin Bussy, was one of the best heads in France—at a song—witnessed the same corruptions, and concluded from them that religion must be a mere fable. This was also the conclusion drawn by the French philosophers of the following century, who thought that because St. Denys did not really carry his head under his arm from Paris to his own abbey, this universal frame must be without a mind—as if there were the most remote connection between the two propositions. Madame de Sévigné reasons differently. She sees, through the clouds of error and corruption, that disfigure its external forms, creeds and ceremonies, the beauty of religion itself, and feels that a faith which subsists and triumphs in the midst of all these corruptions must have the essen-

tial characteristics of divinity. Having fortified herself in this conviction, she does not permit it to carry her out of the world into convents and penitentiaries; nor does she leave it at home, when she goes into the world, and disgrace her principles by joining in the fashionable vices of the day. She takes her religion with her into society, where it enables her to hold up to a licentious and frivolous court the edifying example of a moral purity, which even foes could not venture to impeach, and a cheerful, consistent, intelligent piety, graced and made attractive by a union with the highest accomplishments and most exquisite refinements of civilized life.

We do not quite sympathize with Madame de Sévigné in her admiration of Nicole, the Arnauds, and the other "gentlemen of Port-Royal." This establishment, which was a sort of monastery, acquired a high reputation from having served for a time as a retreat and residence of the great Pascal. His name threw a kind of celebrity over the whole community, which does not seem to be sustained by any of their published works. The Arnauds kept up the controversy, which he had commenced in his famous *Provincials* between the Molinists and the Jansenists—the loose and the strict moralists of the Catholic Church; but being no longer vivified by his genius, it degenerated into a *caput mortuum* of bitter and angry pamphlets, which were never much read, and are now forgotten. From her great partiality for the

Arnauds, and personal intimacy with them, Madame de Sévigné has sometimes been called a Jansenist; and it is not improbable that the worldly fortunes of her family, which were not very brilliant, were injured by this connection; for the Jesuits were all-powerful at Court during the whole period of Louis XIV. But even on this subject she exhibits her usual good sense and good taste, and, with all her admiration of the Arnauds and of Port-Royal, never meddles in her letters with the Jansenist controversy, but, on the contrary, speaks of it, whenever she alludes to it, in a tone of pleasantry as a matter in which she felt no interest.

We must now take leave of Madame de Sévigné, having, we trust, said enough to recommend her to the attention of such of our fair readers as were not before particularly acquainted with her merits. We cannot but notice, in conclusion—if we may venture to tack a trite moral to a tedious tale—the strong impression that remains upon the mind after a glance at the period of Louis XIV., of the prodigious superiority of literary talent over every other exercise of intellect, as a means of conferring permanent distinction on its possessors and all with whom they are connected. The age of Louis XIV. is universally considered as one of the brightest periods in the history of civilization. What gave it this splendid pre-eminence? Louis XIV. himself, although, as Madame de Sévigné justly remarks, he possessed great qualities and eclipsed the glory of most of his predecessors,

now comes in for a very moderate share of the attention we bestow on the time in which he lived. His generals, Condé, Turenne, Luxemburg, and the rest—unquestionably men of distinguished talent—were yet in no way superior to the thunderbolts of war that have wasted mankind from age to age and are now forgotten. His ministers, Fouquet, Colbert, Louvois, have left no marked traces in history. The celebrated beauties that charmed all eyes at the court festivals, have long since mouldered into dust. Yet we still cling with the deepest interest to the memory of the age of Louis XIV. because it was the age of Pascal and Corneille, of Racine, Molière and La Fontaine, of Bossuet, Fenelon, Bourdaloue, Massillon, La Bruyère, La Rochefoucault, and Madame de Sévigné. The time will probably come, in the progress of civilization, when the military and civic glories of this period will be still more lightly, because more correctly estimated, than they are now. When the King who could make war upon Holland, because he was offended by the device of a burgomaster's seal, and the general who burnt the Palatinate in cold blood, will be looked upon—with all their refinement and merit of a certain kind, as belonging essentially to the same class of semi-barbarians with the Tameilanes and Attilas, the Rolands and the Red Jackets. When the Fouquets and Colberts will be considered as possessing a moral value very little higher than that of the squirrels and snakes, which they not inappropriately

assumed as their emblems. But the maxims of La Rochefoucault will never lose their point, nor the poetry of Racine its charm. The graceful eloquence of Fenelon will flow forever through the pages of Telemachus, and the latest posterity will listen with as much, or even greater pleasure than their contemporaries to the discourses of Bossuet and Massillon. The masterly productions of these great men and their illustrious contemporaries, will perpetuate to "the last syllable of recorded time" the celebrity which they originally conferred upon the period when they lived, and crown with a light of perennial and unfading glory the age of Louis XIV.

MARIE LOUISE.

WHO journeys thus onward,
Light-hearted and gay,
As if to a triumph
She passed on her way?
No exile, most surely—
Not thus do they come,
Who are leaving behind them
A heart and a home.

Can she go so lightly,
And joyously back,
Who went to her bridal
So late o'er this track?
Could she smile as when hastening
To welcoming arms,
If shut from the circle
Of home and its charms?

Oh, matchless in beauty,
And kingly in line!
No heart of a woman
Can surely be thine:

Else wouldst thou, this moment,
Thy husband uncrowned,
Weep in sackcloth and ashes,
And sit on the ground.

Is this, proud Napoleon,
The pride of thy home?
Can this be thy mother,
O pale king of Rome?
Alas! we may mourn thee,
But pity who can,
More fickle than woman,
And falser than man.

It was well that the exile,
Shut in by the sea,
Still might solace his anguish
By memory of thee—
Still could keep through all suffering,
Of body and mind,
One blest spot in memory
Where thou wert enshrined ;

Trusting on in a faith
Which no time could remove,
In the strength of thy virtue,
And depth of thy love ;
For his heart, but for this,
In its hardness had been
As the rocks of the ocean
That girdled him in.

Oh, regally wedded,
And regally born !
Not thy state nor thy beauty
Can save thee from scorn ;
And more deeply we mourn thee,
Content in thy home,
Than the Emperor exiled,
Or dead king of Rome.

SUBURBAN ROMANCE.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

WHEN I became incumbent of the parochial district of St. Barnabas, Copenhagen Lanes, I lodged in Peppermint Place. It was then creeping its way into the fields, with the apparent determination not to stop till it had reached Highgate. The brick and mortar invasion had extended to two ranks of houses, which were then in all conditions, from neat, snug finish, to cheerless rooflessness. When I went to take the rooms in number one, on a drizzling afternoon, my landlord was pleased to assure me, while sweeping his arm out of a back window over a landscape in the last stage of damp decay, that the situation was "uncommonly cheerful." The view consisted of a few dismantled garden allotments ; a superannuated summer-house was lying in an attitude of utter despondency against a deserted pigsty ; bunches of drooping hollyhocks, broken down by the weight of their misfortunes, wept rain-drops ; patches of the cabbage and other greens were sicklied over with the pale cast of lime and mortar ; and tulips struggled up out of their beds between brick-bats, in the last

agonies of strangulation. This uncommonly "cheerful situation" was finished off in the background by a damp and ragged hedge ; the whole presenting a vivid tableau of the insatiable Ogre, Town, swallowing up the passive, pastoral, Country.

The chief attraction from my sitting-room was a clayey slough, in which a constant succession of brick-carts were continually stuck during all the working hours of the day ; yet the boundary to this prospect was far from uninviting. Several of the opposite houses were finished and inhabited. The neatest and prettiest of them was that immediately facing my room. If window curtains were ever made of woven snow, that must have been the material of those at the first-floor window of that modest habitation—they were so white and transparent. There was such variety in their arrangement : so much taste in the disposition of the crocuses and snow-drops in the window-sill ; such evident pleasure taken in concealing the wires of the bird cage in impromptu arbors, now of geranium, now of myrtle, or else by an intertwining of cut primroses—that I was irresistibly reminded of one of those charming little cottage windows in the scenes of a French vaudeville. Nor was this impression weakened when I occasionally espied—but very seldom—between the rows of bob-fringe that dangled merrily from the curtains, the face of a lovely brunette, framed in *bandeaux* of jet hair, and illuminated by a pair of piercing black eyes.

What busy eyes they were ! Though I seldom saw *them*, I could see what they were doing all day long ; for, everything being dark, as if to correspond to them, (their owner was in mourning), I could observe the plainer how the little lady in black employed herself behind the film of white curtain. She was incessantly bending over a frame, and I could guess, from the motion of the arm nearest the window, that she embroidered, or did something of that sort, all day long. Now and then the hand appeared to move higher than the frame, and I supposed, from the angle of the elbow, that she was pressing it against her over-wrought eyes. Poor girl ! no wonder if they ached ; for, from morning till evening, every day, except Sundays, during all that cold and cheerless spring, she was to be seen in busy motion. Except on Sunday mornings—I suppose to go to church—she never went abroad ; and no other living soul was ever observed in her room.

In the course of months, my observations of the captivating SILHOUETTE—so I had nicknamed the little black profile—were more frequent than polite. The delicious little gauze of mystery which half-veiled her, piqued my curiosity ; and I could safely indulge in it, as my draperies were much less ærial than hers. Though the east wind blew with continued intensity, and it was quite an effort to leave one's fireside, she was never, during daylight, away from her window. Sometimes I could distinguish that she paused, leant her head on her hand, and gazed with earnest intensity directly under

where I sat. Then, as if suddenly caught in the act, she would turn like lightning to her frame, and the little black arm would move up and down with unusual rapidity. There was a curious circumstance connected with these fits of abstraction and starts of work : I remarked that they happened inversely to the proceedings of my clever young landlord below (an inlayer, carver, and cabinet-maker) ; for, during the moments of my Silhouette's fascination, his saw, his chisel, or plane, or hammer were in full and noisy operation ; and it was exactly at the instant that either of these tools were laid down and the sound ceased, that my little lady resumed her work. I was convinced one morning that this coincidence was no mere fancy. I had by this time got used to the noises in the shop below, and could distinguish, on the forenoon referred to, that friend Bevil was making, at each stroke of his plane, very long shavings. While trying to guess, from the sounds, the length of the plank he was smoothing, I observed the damsel opposite tracing an embroidery pattern against the glass. The tracing goes on well enough for awhile ; but, presently, the left hand is lifted to the little head, the tip of the elbow rests against the window-frame, the tracing hangs against the glass by the point of the pencil held in the other hand ; and the black eyes pour their rays straight into the window below me. The long shavings are turned off with vigorous regularity ; but, hark !—the plane is suddenly arrested half way !—and see, the tracing and pencil instantaneously drop from

the glass opposite, and the piquant little artist vanishes like magic from the window. Presently the planing goes on again with a slow and pensive irregularity that makes me feel quite low-spirited.

Although mine was a pastoral as well as an ecclesiastical charge of the St. Barnabas district, and I was bound to watch over my flock, yet it may be said that such close scrutiny of my neighbors as that which I have confessed was scarcely dignified in a clergyman ; but it must be remembered that what I have here brought together in a short space was spread over several months. Nor did the arduous duties of a new district admit of much idle window gazing. My church was only a temporary one, and I made it my business to call, in succession, on my parishioners, not only to make myself personally acquainted with each, but to invite them to worship. I began this mission at home ; for, although my landlord's mother was a regular attendant at church, the son never once made his appearance within its walls.

Old Mrs. Bevil was a large old lady of painfully timid temperament, whose existence was passed in one of the sunken kitchens, and whose mission on earth was apparently to cook glue for her son, vouchsafing any of the time to be spared between the steaming of the pots in attendance upon me. One Saturday morning I expressed my regret to her that so excellent and industrious a son should appear to be negligent to his Sabbath duties.

"He isn't!" said Mrs. Bevil, sideling towards the door, and feeling, with a hand outstretched behind her, for the handle.

I should mention that Mrs. Bevil was so much "put out" when spoken to by any one above her in station, that when you showed symptoms of engaging her in talk, she winced and made artful efforts to escape—like a child when a dentist exhibits his instruments.

"What church does he go to?"

"French Protestant."

"Indeed! then he is conversant with French!"

Mrs. Bevil had by this time found the door-knob, and had turned it. Her confusion was so great, that her face—never very pale—glowed like a live coal.

"Of course," I repeated, "as your son attends a French place of worship, he understands French."

In the midst of her bewilderment Mrs. Bevil stammered—

"Yes—French polishing."

I dared not smile, lest the ignorant old soul's shame should overwhelm her; so in order to change the subject without actually doing so, I asked if she knew anything of the mysterious young lady opposite?

The old woman courtesied herself backwards into the opening of the door, and having felt that retreat was practicable, she said, "Please, sir; no, sir;" and vanished with the rapidity of a mouse, let out of a lion's cage.

It was not difficult to guess why young Bevil pre-

ferred the French church to my own. I had never doubted that the charming embroideress opposite was a foreigner. She worshipped in a language she understood best ; and her admirer—more in obedience to his silent passion than his spiritual duties—followed her thither to worship *her*. On expatiating one day, however, on the sinfulness of Sabbath-breaking, he partially disarmed me by owning that he had been assiduously learning French in order to understand and join in the service. I made not the slightest allusion to the charming Silhouette ; for I saw from his nervous and blushing manner, that it was too deep an affair with him to be lightly touched. I ascertained that, although he saw his adored daily, and followed her weekly to church, he never had courage to speak to her, or to address her in any way whatever.

My interest in this absorbing case of silent love deepened daily. I pitied young Bevil. Supposing, after he had proceeded to the extremity of avowed courtship, his idol should prove a wicked little French coquette, and jilt him ? Such a presentiment did not want foundation. Although the summer had arrived—and warmer, more congenial weather I never remember—the Silhouette disappeared entirely from behind the fairy curtains. During all the cold weather, when she must have shivered to sit there, she was never absent ; but now, when the window is the only endurable part of a room, she is utterly invisible. Is she skillfully manœuvring Love's delicate sensitive tele-

graph, conscious that she has secured her victim ; and now, after the manner of finished coquettes, does she leave him to pine in the throes of hopeless despair ? Or, doubts she the truth and ardency of his love, as expressed by his silent watchings of her window, and by his regular church-goings ; and does she disappear from his longing, loving looks to lure him to the overt act—a verbal declaration ? If the latter, her tactics will fail. Young Bevil's passion is not a mere flash of romance ; it is earnest and practical. He does not stand idly gazing, and sighing, and hoping, and despairing. The more he loves the harder he works. Until he has placed himself in a position to speak to her with confidence as to the future, he will be silent.

Here I am probably asked, how could I know all this ? I answer, from substantial evidence. When one sees a man running a race, it is certain that there is, far or near, a goal. Young Bevil raced manfully, and the winning-post he kept in view was matrimony. Early and late his tools were audible, not only to obtain capital in money, but to provide property of his own handy-work. When I first took his lodgings, they were scantily furnished ; but the rooms were rapidly filled up ; evidently not for *my* use and pleasure. The capacious tea-caddy, curiously inlaid and splendidly mounted, did not signify much to me ; neither was I ever likely to require the Gothic work-table that I found one evening slid, as if by accident, into a recess ; and to what earthly use could a bachelor in lodgings put

that frame on swivels, studded all around with cribbage pegs, that looked like a swing-cheval without its glass? In short, every addition to the garniture of the apartments was of the feminine gender. I looked upon these novelties as so many notices to quit; for I did not doubt that the rooms were being quietly prepared for a more cherished occupant. This supposition was confirmed, when, curiosity prompting me to examine the work-table, I saw, exquisitely inlaid in cypher on the inside of the lid, the word "Manette."

All this while, the Silhouette remained obstinately invisible. For a few Sundays she continued to go to church, but so thickly veiled that a sight of her face was impossible. Still he followed; but refrained from speaking. The time had not come. He would not offer his rough but honest hand while yet without a home to which it could lead her.

Poor Bevil had soon to live on, not only in silent, but in sightless despair; the little black profile ceased to appear, not only behind her snowy transparencies, but bodily on Sundays. From this time Bevil's intelligent, but sad and thoughtful features struck me with pity; I could not but see that he was staking his hopes—his very existence—on a cast, which might turn up a deadly blank.

On one occasion my hopes revived for him. It was towards the close of a lovely summer's day. The whiteness of the gossamer curtains made them dazzle in the sun. The figure in black approached; and after

a hesitating interval appeared in distinct outline close behind the gauze. All this while, the sharp cuts of Bevil's chisel were audible in busy succession under me. The Silhouette's eyes only, appeared just above the short curtain, darting a long, devouring gaze upon the toiler ; they were red ; a handkerchief was pressed closely to her face. The chisel goes on chipping away, without one intermission. I would give a quarter's stipend if Bevil would only be idle for a second, and look up ; for as the gazer strains her eyes upon him, tears pour out of them, and sparkle in the sun like falling diamonds. Presently she sinks into a chair, as if overcome with grief, and disappears. With this anguish, whatever its immediate cause, I felt certain that Bevil was connected with it.

"Surely this mystery is not impenetrable. I will unravel it." Accordingly, next morning, I took our opposite neighbors out of the regular order of my visits, called, and questioned the woman who rented the house. I learnt that the girl's name *was* Manette. She was an orphan ; her father, a French teacher, had died recently in a hospital. Her embroidery was fetched and carried to and from the warehouse by my informant's husband. Her industry was extraordinary, and she earned a comfortable subsistence. I asked to see her, but was told she admitted no person whatever into her room. Of late, especially, she concealed her face, with an apparent dread of being recognized by strangers.

My inquiries, therefore, darkened rather than cleared

up the mystery. As I left the house, I observed that my landlord had been watching. He looked wistfully into my face as I passed him on the door-step, and I answered his silent appeal by desiring him to follow me to my room.

A very short conversation proved that all my observations and deductions had been correctly made. He owned everything. It was painful to see a fine, muscular, handsome man, suffused with the shame—honest shame though it was—trembling with the weakness we only expect from young impulsive girls. I reasoned with him. I showed him the full risk he ran in nurturing so perfect an ideal out of a mere image; for to him Manette was nothing more. I pointed out the utter uselessness of his self-imposed penance. She might be all he thought her; she might be everything the reverse. How could he know without some acquaintanceship? It would be madness to give rashly a pledge of matrimony without some probation.

In the end he promised to try and see Manette the following day; and, descending to his shop, he worked away harder than ever.

Even now I see Bevil as, next morning, he stood at the door opposite. His lips quiver; but his brow expresses a firm, but anxious purpose. The woman who admits him tells him something which surprises and disappoints him. Manette, for the first time for a month, has gone out. The next day was Sunday, and

the lover abstained from intruding himself. On the Monday he had as little success. In the evening he consulted me as to what he had better do. Should he write ?

I advised him by no means to commit himself ; and offered, if he would wait, I would use the influence of my cloth to obtain an interview for him. When the morning came, Bevil desired to accompany me. He would, he said, go himself ; but would feel comforted and fortified by the sanction of my presence.

Accordingly we sallied forth across the road at nine the next morning. I would not wait to hear the answer of the landlady ; but pushing by the driver of a spring-cart that had just stopped at the house, went straight up to Manette's door. Bevil followed. I knocked ; no answer. Not a sound within. I knocked again, and quietly called her by name. Utter silence. I then tried the door ; it yielded, and we entered.

The picture of neatness and prettiness which I had drawn as existing behind those dainty muslin curtains was not realized. It was indeed reversed. The room was in the greatest confusion, and untenanted. " Why, you see, sir," said the woman of the house who had ushered the carter up behind us, " Madam'selle went away the first thing yesterday morning. She sold her bits of things to the broker (you'll have to get the sofa bed out of the window, Mr. Bracket), and never give us no notice in a regular way (now mind the walls with them saucepans), leastways not a week's : but

my husband never went to charge her, poor thing, for she paid as punctually as the Monday morning cum—allays."

"Has she left her present address?" I asked.

"Oh dear no, quite contra-ry. Says she to me, says she—leastways as well as I could understand her French brogue, and she had her han'kercher a kivering of her face—'Mrs. Blinkinson,' says she, 'don't,' says she, 'answer no questions as may be asked about me. I am a-going,' says she, 'to where I hope nobody may find me out.' And then she pulled the street door to, and I never see her more—and never shall."

I looked at Bevil. He was shivering as if an icy chill had struck to his heart. He looked around the room slowly, vacantly. The bird was lying at the bottom of its cage—dead. The flowers, no longer tended, were drooping. He stretched forth his trembling hand, and, plucking a geranium, put it into his bosom. He then turned, and, without speaking, descended the stairs. With unsteady gait he entered his own house.

For more than a week I missed the sounds from below. Bevil had gone straight to his bed-room, and had not left it since. His mother now, instead of tending him with glue-pots, was constantly on the stairs with broths, and coffee, and tea, and a variety of other sloppy sustentation; but her son would partake of them very sparingly. I determined to rouse him, and advised that, as he would not or could not work, an active search after the lost damsel was better than

stolid, inactive grief. This roused him and he followed my advice.

Weary days and weary weeks were spent in the search. The cunning Silhouette eluded him as if she had been an *Ombre Chinois*. Bevil first addressed himself to the shop for which Manette had worked. The master of it said that he never saw Manette but once, and then she came with specimens of her embroidery, to get more. It was so good that he had employed her ever since, and was both surprised and chagrined at her sudden desertion. He had, through her landlord, offered her a good salary to work at his house, and had hoped she would accept. Her strange disappearance was therefore the more unaccountable.

The clergyman of the French church, when Bevil sought him, was as surprised as her lover at Manette's absence from service and communion. In the latter, he said, she was a regular and deeply impressed partaker. He could give no information. Neither could the officers of the hospital, where the girl's father had died in the winter (of whom Bevil also inquired), give him comfort.

"There is nothing for it," I told him one day, "but time and work."

He did after a time resume his work, but the sounds given out from his bench made me melancholy. His tools were taken up, used, and laid down with a slow, intermittent apathy, which showed that the heart and the hands did not go together.

Work, on the contrary, grew so fast on *my* hands that I hardly had time for sleep. My successor to the curacy I had left in Southwark was taken ill, and, besides my own duty, I had volunteered to do a part of his. This occasionally consisted in administering consolation and prayer to the inmates of one of the Borough hospitals.

During one of my visits to the female ward, I was attracted by a few words which fell from the clinical lecturer who was addressing a knot of pupils standing at the bed on a case of tumor of the face. He had, in fact (warming with his subject), glided from an explanation of the operation which had been performed and of the after treatment, to an involuntary eulogium on the beauty of the patient, which the consequences of the disease and its remedy tended to impair. I got a peep at the damsel between the shoulders of a couple of the shortest of the listeners, and saw just above the bed-clothes (which were held up with extreme rigidity and care to conceal the lower part of the face), a pair of familiar black eyes. They quite thrilled through me. The students were dismissed ; and I overheard a sweet voice ask "if zat scar"—

"Don't let it trouble you for one instant," said Dr. Fleam, as he left the bedside ; "it will hardly be visible, and in a week you will be as well—and as pretty—as ever."

I looked again. Those piercing black eyes met mine point-blank. There was a scream, smothered by

the bed-clothes—under which the head was instantly popped.

But that was enough. I felt convinced that Manette was found.

About a month from that date there was joy at No. 1 Peppermint Place. It is November ; on one side of my fire-place sit Bevil and Manette. Old Mrs. Bevil has gradually pushed her chair back to the window ; and, bit by bit, has nibbled the folds of the curtain, until she is completely hidden behind it in that comfortable obscurity in which she alone delights. They had assembled to hear a lecture from me.

“ Personal vanity,” I began, with all the solemnity to be invoked in the presence of a pair of eyes which sparkled so with joy that it seemed impossible for their mistress to school and temper them to the occasion—“ the vanity of mere personal comeliness had nearly wrecked the happiness of both of you. Because you, Manette, were afflicted with a mere tumor that distorted for a time that which you seemed to cherish more than your worldly welfare—your beauty—you sold your worldly goods and deserted your home, and means of subsistence, rather than the deformity should be seen by one whom you secretly loved. Had you no confidence in the attractions which never fade, that you depended solely upon those which, despite all your efforts, will assuredly pass away ?

“ *Non*,” said Manette, lifting her eyelids with a sort of timid courage. “ He loved me only for my face

—he 'ad nevare spoken. When he saw and loved my face, it was *comme il faut*. *Eh, bien!* if he 'ad seen my face, when it was horrib' disfiguré, would he not have hate me? *Oui.*"

A pardonable impulse threw Bevil's arm over the back of Manette's chair, as he exclaimed—

"Oh! no, no."

"You were, I must say, both to blame. Bevil for timidity and Manette for rashness," I remarked.

Manette looked down on the prettiest little toe in the district of St. Barnabas, as it pointed itself to traçe in outline the pattern of the hearth-rug, and went into a long explanation of her motives in the most delicious broken French. She was quite alone in the world, and the pain and hideous tumor in her face prevented her from working—she saw ruin, and nothing but ruin before her. The day her bird died, she felt so desolate, that she determined to go to a hospital, in order to have the operation performed. On recovering, if she had been much disfigured, she intended never to see Bevil more. She had not courage to bear the disappointment which he might have inflicted, by the altered sentiments she anticipated in her lover, in consequence of her altered appearance; and she preferred the certainty of trying to forget him. If she were perfectly cured, she intended again to return to her old lodging, and by hard work to regain her furniture.

The end of this, like most other romances, was marriage. With marriage, as is well known, all mysteries vanish. Manette's story was this: Her father was a political refugee from the storm of 1848; he had been a staunch Orleanist Deputy in the French Chamber, and had to fly, with his daughter, for his life. In England he taught his native tongue as a means of livelihood, till overtaken by illness. Then Manette practised an accomplishment she was proficient in, with so much success that she supported her father till his death. She knew the time would come when the family property they possessed, near Bordeaux, would be restored, and she did not wish to let her situation be known, especially to the unhappy family at Claremont. Hence, she kept herself a recluse till the terrible disappointment drove her to the hospital.

I was not allowed the honor of officiating, the minister of the French Protestant chapel having been preferred. Of course I was obliged to remove to another lodging.

Nor did the Bevils stay long in Peppermint Place. Their united talents in the decorative arts did not long remain hidden. They removed to a fine house near Cavendish Square, and worked for the first nobility. A label in the window tells you that there "They speak French."

Passing the shop the other day, I was surprised to find another name over the door. The owner of

it told me that Mr. Bevil had gone to live in France, in order to superintend his wife's estate on the Garonne. It appeared, then, that my piquant Silhouette had regained her patrimony. The next holiday I get I shall certainly pay them a visit.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY.

Who is this, with calm demeanor,
And with form of matchless grace,
Wearing yet the modest beauty
Of her childhood in her face ?

Close the white folds of her kerchief
All her neck and bosom wrap,
And her soft brown hair is hidden
Underneath her Norman cap.

And what doth she in such garments,
And with such a modest mien,
Here among the high-born beauties
Of the court of Josephine ?

This is she who left the convent,
For the fierce and restless throngs,
Who were gathering head for battle,
To avenge her country's wrongs.

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THE QUEEN OF SWEDEN

This is she who to its rescue,
Was the foremost to advance—
She who struck to death the tyrant
Of her well beloved France.

She who had the martyr's spirit
To perform as she had planned ;
Taking thus her life's sweet promise
In her own presumptuous hand.

All the while, herself deceiving,
With this dangerous subtlety,
“ Evil, surely, is not evil
If a good is gained thereby.

“ If I perish for my country,
Is not this a righteous deed ?
If I save the lives of thousands,
What is it that one should bleed ?”

So, arraigned at the tribunal,
This alone was her reply—
“ It was I who did this murder,
And I do not fear to die.”

Therefore, with her simple garments,
And her unassuming port,
Have they placed her lovely picture
Near the beauties of the Court :

Therefore pitying admiration,
More than blame for her we feel—
Hers was noble and heroic,
Though it was mistaken zeal.

And so long as France shall honor
Those whose blood for her is shed,
Shall the name of Charlotte Corday
Live among the martyred dead !

THE FOUNTAIN VERY FAR DOWN.

BY VIRGINIA F. TOWNSEND.

"I DON'T believe it," said my cousin Ned, who was passing his college vacation at our house, and there was a world of unwritten skepticism in the air with which he dashed down the paper over whose damp columns his eyes had been travelling for the previous half hour.

"You see, Cousin Nelly," continued Ned, getting up and pacing the long old-fashioned parlor with quick, nervous strides, "it's all sheer nonsense to talk about these doors in every human heart. It sounds very pretty and pathetic in a story, I'll admit; but so do a great many other things which reason and actual experience entirely repudiate. There are hearts—alas! that their name should be legion—where 'far away up' there is no door to be opened, and 'far away down' are no deeps to be fathomed. Now don't, Cousin Nelly, level another such rebuking glance at me from those brown eyes, for I have just thought of a case illustrative of my theory. Don't you remember Miss Stebbins, the old maid, who lived at the foot of the hill, and how I picked a rose for

you one morning which had climbed over her fence into the road, and so, of course, became 'public property?' Faugh! I shall never forget the tones of the virago's voice, or the scowl on her forehead as she sallied out of the front door and shook her hand at me. A woman who could refuse a half withered flower to a little child, I wonder that roses could blossom on her soil! At the 'smiting of the rod,' no waters could flow out of such a granite heart. In the moral desert of such a character, no fertilizing stream can make its way."

I did not answer Cousin Ned's earnest, eloquent tones, for just then there was the low rap of visitors at the parlor door; but I have always thought there was a good angel in the room while he was speaking, and that it flew straight to Miss Stebbins, and looking down, down, very far down in her heart, he saw a fountain there, rank weeds grew all around it, the seal of years was on its lip, and the dust of time deep on the seal; but the angel smiled, as it floated upwards, and murmured, "I shall return and remove the seal, and the waters will flow."

Stern and grim sat Miss Stebbins at her work, one summer afternoon. The golden sunshine slept and danced in its play-place in the corner, and broke into a broad laugh along the ceiling, and a single beam, bolder than the rest, crept to the hem of Miss Stebbins's gown, and looked up with a timid, loving smile in her face, such as no human being ever wore when looking there.

Poor Miss Stebbins ! those stern, harsh features only daguerreotyped too faithfully the desolate, arid heart beneath them ; and that heart, with its dry fountain, was a true type of her life, with the one flower of human affection which had blossomed many years before along its bleak, barren highway.

She never seemed to love anybody, unless it was her brother William, who was a favorite with everybody ; but he went to sea, and had never been heard of since. Sally had always been a stray sheep among the family ; but dark hours, and at last *death*, came upon all the rest, and so the homestead fell into her hands. Such was the brief verbal history of Miss Stebbins's life, which I received from Aunt Mary, who closed it there, in rigid adherence to her favorite maxim, never to speak evil of her neighbors.

But, that summer afternoon, there came the patter of children's feet along the gravel-walk which led to Miss Stebbins's front door ; and, at the same moment, the angel with golden-edged wings came down from its blue-sky home into Miss Stebbins's parlor.

She raised her head and saw them, two weary-looking little children, with golden hair and blue eyes, standing hand in hand under the little portico, and then that old termagant scowl darkened her forehead, and she asked, with a sharp, disagreeable note in her voice, like the raw breath in the northeast wind—

“ Wa-all ! I should like to know what you want standing there ? ”

"Please, ma'am," said the boy, in a timid, entreating voice, which ought to have found its way straight into any heart, "little sister and I feel very tired, for we have walked a long way. Will you let us sit down on the step and rest a little while?"

"No ; I can't have children loafing round on my premises," said Miss Stebbins, with the same vinegar sharpness of tone which had characterized her preceding reply. Moreover, the sight of any of the miniature specimens of her race seemed always fated to arouse her belligerent propensities. "So just take yourselves off ; and the quicker, the better 'twill be for you."

"Don't stay any longer, Willy. I am afraid," whispered the little girl, with a tremor rippling through her voice, as she pulled significantly at her brother's coat sleeve.

"Willy ! Willy ! That was your brother's name ; don't you remember ?" the angel bent down and whispered very softly in the harsh woman's ear ; and all the time his hand was gliding down, down in her heart, searching for that hidden fountain. "You must have been just about that little girl's age when you and he used to go trudging down into the meadows together to find sweet flagroot. And you used to keep tight hold of his hand, just as she does. Oh, how tired you used to get ! Don't you remember that old brown house, where nobody lived but starved rats and a swarm of wasps, who made their nest there in the summer-time ? And you used to sit down on the old step, which the worms

had eaten in so many places, and rest there. How he loved you! and how careful he was always to give you the best seat! and, then, he never spoke one cross word to you, if everybody else did. Now, if you should let those children sit down and rest, just as you and Willy did on the old brown step, you could keep a sharp eye on them, to see they didn't get into any mischief."

The angel must have said all this in a very little time, for the children had only reached the gravel-walk again, when Miss Stebbins called out to them; and, this time, that spiteful little note in her voice was not quite so prominent—

"Here, you may sit right down on that corner, a little while; but, mind you, don't stir; for, if you do, you'll have to budge."

"Little sister," said the boy, in a low tone, after they were seated, "lay your head here, and try to go to sleep."

The little girl laid her head, with its shower of golden bright curls, on her brother's breast; but, the next moment, she raised it, saying—

"I can't sleep, brother, I'm so thirsty."

"Don't you remember that day you and Willy went into the woods after blackberries, and how you lost your way groping in the twilight of the forest?" again whispered the angel, with his hand feeling all the time for the fountain. "You found an old lightning-blasted tree, and you sat down on it, and he put his arm round you just so, and said, 'Try and go to sleep, little

sister.' But you couldn't, you were so thirsty ; for you had walked full three miles. Who knows but what those children have, too ?"

There was a little pause after the angel had said this, and then Miss Stebbins rose up and went into her pantry, where the shelves were all of immaculate whiteness, and she could see her face in the brightly scoured tin. She brought out a white pitcher, and, going into the garden, filled it at the spring. Returning, she poured some of the cool contents into a cup which stood on the table, and carried it to the children ; and she really held it to the little girl's lips all the time she was drinking.

Farther and farther down in the heart of the woman crept the hand of the angel ; nearer and nearer to the fountain it drew.

Miss Stebbins went back to her sewing, but, somehow, her fingers did not fly as nimbly as usual. The memories of bygone years were rising out of their mouldy sepulchres ; but all freshly they came before her, with none of the grave's rust and dampness upon them.

"That little boy's eyes, when he thanked you for the water, looked just as Willy's used to," once more whispered the angel, bending down close to Miss Stebbins's ear. "And his hair looks like Willy's too, as he sits there with that sunbeam brightening its gold, and his arm thrown so lovingly around his sister's waist. There ! did you see how wistfully he looked up at the grapes, whose purple sides are turned towards him as they hang over the portico ? How Willy used to love

grapes! And how sweet your bowls of bread and milk used to taste, after one of your rambles into the woods! If those children have walked as far as you did—and don't you see the little boy's coat and the little girl's faded dress are all covered with dust—they must be very hungry, as well as tired and thirsty. Don't you remember that apple-pie you baked this morning? I never saw a pie done to a finer brown in my life. How sweet it would taste to those little tired things, if they could only eat a piece here in the parlor, where the flies and the sun wouldn't keep tormenting them all the time!"

A moment after Miss Stebbins had stolen with noiseless step to her pantry, and, cutting out two generous slices from her apple-pie, she placed them in saucers, returned to the front door, and said to the children—

"You may come in here, and sit down on the stools by the fire-place and eat some pie; but you must mind and not drop any crumbs on the floor."

It was very strange, but that old harsh tone had almost left her voice. The large, tempting slices were placed in the little hands eagerly lifted up to receive them; and at that moment, out from the lip of the fountain, out from the dust which lay heavy upon its seal, there came a single drop, and it fell down upon Miss Stebbins's heart. It was the first which had fallen there for years. Ah, the angel had found the fountain then!

The softened woman went back to her seat and the angel did not bend down and whisper in her ear again;

but all the time his hand was busy, very busy at its work.

"Where is your home, children?" inquired Miss Stebbins, after she had watched for a while, with a new, pleasant enjoyment, the children, as they dispatched with hungry avidity their pie.

"Mary and I haven't any home now. We had one once before papa died, a great way over the sea," answered the boy.

"And where are you going now? and what brought you and your little sister over the sea?" still farther queried the now interested woman.

"Why, you see, ma'am, just before papa died, he called old Tony to him—now, Tony was black, and always lived with us—'Tony,' said he, 'I am going to die, and you know I have lost everything, and the children will be all alone in the world. But, Tony, I had a sister once that I loved, and she loved me; and, though I haven't seen her for a great many years, still I know she loves me, if she's living, just as well as she did when she and I used to go hand in hand through the apple-orchard to school; and, Tony, when I'm dead and buried, I want you to sell the furniture, and take the money it brings you and carry the children back to New England. You'll find her name and the place she used to live in a paper—which anybody'll read for you—in the drawer there. And, Tony, when you find her, just take Willy and Mary to her, and tell her I was their father and that I sent them to her on my death-bed.

and asked her to be a mother to them for my sake. It'll be enough, Tony, to tell her that.' And Tony cried real loud, and he said, 'Massa, if I forget one word of what you've said, may God forget me.'

"Well, papa died, and, after he was buried, Tony brought little sister and me over the waters. But, before we got here, Tony was taken sick with the fever, and he died a little while after the ship reached the land and they had carried him on shore. But, just before he died, he called me to him and put a piece of paper in my hand. 'Don't lose it, Willy,' he said, 'for poor Tony's going, and you'll have to find the way to your aunt's all alone. The money's all spent, too, and they say it's a good hundred miles to the place where she lived. But keep up a good heart, and ask the folks the way, and for something to eat when you're hungry; and don't walk too many miles a day, 'cause little sister ain't strong. Perhaps somebody'll help you on with a ride, or let you sleep in their house nights. Now don't forget, Willy; and shake hands the last time with poor Tony.'

"After that, we stayed at the inn till the next day, when they buried Tony; and, when they asked us what we were going to do, we told them we were going to our aunt's, for papa had sent us to her, and then they let us go. When we asked folks the way, they told us, though they always stared, and sometimes shook their heads. We got two rides, and always a good place to sleep. They said our aunt

lived round here ; but, we got so tired walking, we had to stop."

"And what was your father's name?" asked Miss Stebbins, and, somehow, there was a choking in her throat, and the hand of the angel was placed on the fountain as she spoke.

"William Stebbins ; and our aunt's name was Sally Stebbins. Please, ma'am, do you know her?"

Off, at that moment, came the seal, and out leaped a fresh, blessed tide of human affection, and fell down upon the barren heart-soil that grew fertile in a moment.

"William ! my dear brother William !" cried Miss Stebbins, as she sprang towards the children with outstretched arms, and tears raining fast down her cheeks. "Oh, for your sake, I will be a mother to them !"

A year had passed away ; college vacation had come again, and once more Cousin Ned was at our house. In the summer gloaming we went to walk, and our way lay past Miss Stebbins' cottage. As we drew near the wicket, the sound of merry child-laughter rippled gleefully to our ears, and a moment after, from behind that very rose-tree so disagreeably associated with its owner in Cousin Ned's mind, bounded two golden-haired children.

"Come, Willy ! Mary ! you have made wreaths of my roses until they are well-nigh gone. You must gather violets after this."

"*Mirabile dictu!*" ejaculated Cousin Ned. "Is *that* the woman who gave me such a blessing a long time ago, for plucking half a withered rose from that very tree?"

"The very same, Cousin Ned," I answered; and then I told him of the change which had come over the harsh woman, of her love, her gentleness, and patience for the orphan children of her brother; and that, after all, there was a fountain very far down in her heart, as there surely was in everybody's, if we could only find it.

"Well, Cousin Nelly," said Ned, "I'll agree to become a convert to your theory without further demurring, if you'll promise to tell me where to find a hidden fountain that lies very far down in a dear little somebody's heart, and whose precious waters are gushing only for me."

There was a glance, half arch, half loving, from those dark, handsome eyes, which made me think Cousin Ned knew he would not have to go very far to find it.

MADAME ROLAND.

A MIEN of modest loveliness,
A brow on which no shadow lies,
And woman's soul of truthfulness
Outlooking from soft hazel eyes :

Thy placid features only show,
The happy mother, faithful wife,
Not her whose fate it was to know
All strange vicissitudes of life.

Unnoticed in thy youthful days
It was thy happy lot to move,
Brightening life's unobtrusive ways
With the sweet ministries of love,

And learning the great truths of life,
That best are learned in solitude.
But only in its after strife
Are ever proved or understood !



MISS MARY HARRIS

That toiling early, toiling late,
For others, is our highest bliss—
Man even, in his best estate,
Hath no more happiness than this.

Such truth it was, that even there,
Where reigned the prison's gloom and chill,
Could keep thee wholly from despair,
And make thee toil for others still,

Till thine own sorrows half forgot,
Thy noblest sacrifice was shown,
In words and deeds for those whose lot
Was far more wretched than thine own.

Yet well for thee our tears may flow,
Though high thy name emblazoned stands,
Thou, with a woman's heart, couldst know
No life that woman's heart demands.

Happier than thou, with fame and wealth,
Is she who cheers earth's humblest place ;
Leaving no picture of herself,
Save in a daughter's modest face.

“CATCH THE SUNSHINE.”

BY MARION HARLAND.

“ I AM weary ! Oh, so weary ! ”

The speaker's head sank back into the cushions of her easy-chair. She was young and still pretty, although the lips had lost their carnation tint and the cheek its roundness. Her hair, once fine, but now faded and dry, was stretched back from her temples, unrelieved by ripple or bandeaux, and confined in a loose, untidy-looking knot at the back of the neck. Nor was her apparel better adapted to heighten natural comeliness or atone for the loss of personal charms. A cashmere robe—cut after the pattern so aptly denominated “the blouse”—neither clean nor new, worn because it was comfortable, hid her figure in its clumsy folds ; and a pair of worsted slippers, whose only recommendation must have been this same comfortableness, since they preserved on all sides a respectful distance from the tiny feet, rested upon the tiger-skin rug. The room betrayed none of the negligence of its mistress. It was tastefully fur-

nished as a nursery-parlor, but with evident reference to the wants, intellectual and physical, of children of a larger growth. The window-bars were concealed by azaleas and japonicas, above whose evergreen branches hung a canary's cage ; choice pictures decked the walls ; there were books in costly bindings in cases and upon tables ; a cottage piano, shut, stood against the further side of the apartment, and the stand at the lady's side bore a small but beautiful bouquet of the most fragrant flowers winter can win from their allegiance to summer. The blinds of one window were bowed ; those of the other closed, and in their shade a child was sleeping in her crib. The pouting mouth and delicate skin were the mother's, but the forehead, clear and broad, and the wreath of chestnut curls must have been the father's gift. She slept soundly, the very picture of happy innocence ; one hand, like a plump white shell, folded over its pink lining, lay upon the outside of the coverlet, the other indenting her cheek. Once she smiled in her slumbers, and at the same instant the mother stirred uneasily, and a fretful moan again moved the silent air.

"Weary ! weary !"

The door opened unheard, and the advance of the intruder was as noiseless. There were no creaking hinges or thin carpets in that establishment. The rustle of garments caught the sick woman's ear just as a smiling face, flushed with exercise in the frosty wind, bent over to leave a kiss upon hers.

"Hatty Dale! I am glad to see you!" was her greeting, in a tone of pleasure that formed a strange prelude to the languor with which she added, "But you startled my poor nerves terribly, coming in so abruptly."

"As if I did not always enter in the same way," returned Miss Dale, pulling off her furred gauntlets to warm her fingers at the fire. "Nothing that is expected can be a surprise, disagreeable or pleasant, and I should like to inquire, Mrs. Temple, what you have to do, at this hour of the day, but wait and wish for my coming?"

She crossed over to look at the babe. "I will not kiss her just yet. Her start at the touch of the tip of my nose would be more reasonable as well as more genuine than was her mother's. And now, my dear lady prisoner, how do you find yourself this morning?"

"Worse, if possible, than when you were here yesterday, ill as I appeared then, and this confinement is robbing me of my little remaining strength. I weaken every hour."

"So I should think! Why don't you go out?"

"Hatty! what are you saying? This weather?"

"This weather!" said Hatty, stoutly. "What if the thermometer does stand at zero? The air is as dry and pure as ever breathed in the tropics, and tenfold more bracing. Are your lungs diseased?"

"Mercy! no, I hope not!" with a shudder. "How thoughtless in you to put such a notion into my head!

I shall not have a moment's peace of mind until I have an auscultation. Candidly tell me, do you detect any symptoms of"——

"Consumption do you mean?" asked the other, coolly bringing out the word her nervous friend failed to articulate. "About as many as I detect in myself or in little Blanche there. You may rest assured that I would instantly communicate any suspicions of that kind to you, for, should they prove well-founded, I should feel that I had done you a signal service instead of injury. My opinion, Mary, has always been that, when you discover what your disease is, you will cure it yourself."

It was hard to be angry, however cutting her language, in its hidden meaning, may have been, with that kind, good-humored face before one's eyes. Yet Mrs. Temple colored in vexation or embarrassment as she answered: "That is scarcely fair, Hatty. You are well aware that Dr. Pilson, whose skill nobody questions, after a careful investigation of my case, is completely at fault as to the seat of the complaint. How can I presume to judge for myself?"

"Just what I said!" replied Hatty, stealing a roguish glance at the kindling face. "I do not dispute Dr. Pilson's skill when he *can* make out a 'case,' nor his ability, when he fails here, to make out a bill, that, in length and clearness of details, must compensate himself and the patient's friends for the trifling disappointment in the first instance."

"One fact you will admit," said the other ; "my enforced extravagance in that respect, if extravagance you choose to call it, is the only expensive folly in which I indulge. My silks and furs and laces for the year do not draw heavily upon my husband's pocket."

"Better that they should. I venture to affirm that he had rather settle a milliner's bill for a hundred dollars, than balance that 'little account' of your courtly physician's by half that sum. I have heard house owners say that a continual outlay for repairs is very disheartening when the tenement operated upon seemed none the better for the labor and money expended. The best thing to be done then is to pull down entirely or throw the property into market."

"Which means, I suppose, that Horace ought to tire of me and wish me in my grave. I shall be there soon enough, Hatty ; never fear !"

"Soon enough, I allow, dear Mary," rejoined Miss Dale, changing her bantering tone to one of earnest tenderness. "Many years hence will be too soon for your devoted husband and true friends to consign you to the tomb. It is to avert the terrible woe that would attend upon your untimely death that I would incite you to a different mode of existence. You have much to live for, Mary ; everything that makes life desirable and beautiful ; yet I have often heard you declare it to be a burden."

"It is !" sobbed the weak dyspeptic. "You, who

have never suffered a day's illness, can philosophize and preach about the necessity of altering my habits, my 'mode of existence,' and so on. I own I do not live like a well person, for the obvious reason that I am *not* well, an argument to which, as Dr. Pilson says, some exceedingly sensible, healthy people, are strangely obtuse. You ascribe your freedom from sickness and pain to your cheerfulness, and active exercise in the open air. You sleep soundly; you think it is in consequence of your contented frame of mind, and because you have not done injustice to your digestive organs. You see me sitting, day after day, in my easy-chair in this close, warm room; averse to undertaking even the trifling journey of a single flight of stairs; capricious in appetite and spirits; and you cry, 'No wonder she is sick!' You confound cause and effect, Hatty."

"Well argued, Dr. Pilson!" laughed Hatty. "If my eyes had been shut, I could have fancied you the worthy Galen himself. There now, Mary, don't get angry. It is to his interest to make you believe yourself sick; it is to mine to convince you that you might be well if you would 'make an effort,' as Mr. Dombey's sister says—what was her name?"

"I do not know, I am sure"—a little fretfully. "I have never read the book."

"No; but Horace told me he meant to read it aloud to you, since your eyes would not permit you to enjoy its contents for yourself."

“He offered to do so”—with a sigh; “but I was too nervous to bear the rustling of the leaves near me, especially in the evening, which is the only time he can spend at home. You think me very foolish, no doubt; but I cannot help it.”

“I do not say that you are ‘foolish;’ but I regret, as you must also, that this extreme susceptibility to light and noise deprives your husband of what would otherwise afford him great pleasure. He cannot read to himself, either, unless he withdraws to another room, which he will not do, I know, while his presence gives you any comfort.”

“He never complains,” said Mrs. Temple, in a voice that had a touch of offended pride.

“And you are longing to add: ‘When he does, it will be time for you to interfere in our domestic arrangements,’” finished Hatty.

“You cannot quarrel with me, Mary; so give up the attempt. You cannot forget the depth and sincerity of my love for you, and that, in my estimation, Horace has not his peer upon this continent.”

The right chord was struck. The spark in the eye was dimmed by dew; and the lip trembled while it smiled.

Hatty went on; “Whatever may be your trials—and I know they are not few—you have the blessing of one of the noblest, fondest husbands that ever was given to woman. You were his pride, his glory, while your health lasted; now”—her glance ran around the

chamber—"you are no less his idol, although the sick-room is your temple."

The wife's tears flowed afresh, but in a more abundant and healthful stream.

"It is true—all true; and I, poor wretch! can offer him no return for his goodness. I wish, sometimes, that I were out of his way, that he had a companion more worthy, more congenial. You may well say that my trials are not light. Only four days ago, I suffered extreme mortification—worse than that—agony of spirit, because I felt that I was depreciating in his eyes. Oh, if his love should wear out under these constant tests, this incessant demand for his patient forbearance!"

"I hope there is no need of such a fear," said Hattie, soothingly. "But what is this new trouble?"

"You may recollect Eleanor Stewart, whom it was said Horace addressed before he knew me—a dashing belle, who spent a winter here with her sister, Mrs. Manners?"

"I do, perfectly."

"Whether his admiration was, in truth, mingled with love, I cannot tell," pursued Mrs. Temple; "but certain it is that he has always remembered her as the finest specimen of a certain type of beauty he ever saw. She had not seen him since his marriage until one day last week, when he met her on the street. He came home fairly raving about her. I wish you could have heard him. Three years, he said, had wrought no visible change in her, unless, indeed, they had added to her

attractions. Her style was peculiar—in its way inimitable. She had accosted him with the most engaging friendliness, congratulated him upon his happiness as a husband and father, and expressed a desire to become acquainted with me. He represented the state of my health which debarred me from visiting my most intimate friends; whereupon, with what he called a ‘grateful disregard of etiquette’—with what *I* considered bold impertinence—she begged to be allowed to pay her respects to me in person, at as early a day as might be convenient to me. She ‘could not think of standing upon ceremony with the wife of an old and esteemed friend.’ By the time that he got thus far, I was half mad with a nervous headache, for he talked faster and louder than usual, and was in such a merry bustle that I positively feared his head was turned. I had to entreat him first to lay aside the poker, inasmuch as the fire did not need stirring; and he only used it to beat time upon the gate to the chant of Miss Eleanor’s perfections; then to stop chirping to the bird, and to throw the cover over the cage, for Dicky, in reply, was piping his shrillest notes; then please not to finger my flowers, and finally to sit down, and tell me, in as few words as possible, what his commands were.”

“Oh, Mary!” uttered Miss Dale, involuntarily.

“Yes, I *was* cross; but, if you had the least conception of what nerves are, you would sympathize with me. Well, he quieted down, and asked my pardon for his thoughtlessness. ‘I have no commands whatever

Mary,' said he ; ' but it would please me to see Miss Stewart in my house, if the thought is not too repugnant to you ; and I believe that her society would do you good ; she is so lively and entertaining.' Think of that, Hatty, when Dr. Pilson has said, over and over, that excitement is the very worst thing in the world for me in my present condition ! and my favorite detestation is one of your so-called ' lively ' women."

" I had better take my leave, then," said her visitor, rising.

A hasty motion of Mrs. Temple's arm stopped her. " You are too bad !" she said, half crying, half laughing. " As if I could mean you, my best, almost my only friend ! Sit down, and hear me through. The conclusion of the matter—for I was too weak and too weary to dispute—was, that Miss Stewart might call the following morning, if agreeable to her ladyship, and that Mr. Temple should be at home to receive her, for I could not sustain so much brilliancy alone. I was miserable all the forenoon, for my panado was too sweet, and soured as soon as I had swallowed it ; and I shall always be sure that that blundering housekeeper of mine mixed green with my black tea, although she has been told twenty times that it is rank poison to me. Blanche, too, according to her father's directions, must be dressed in her prettiest frock ; and, when the maid brought her to me to see that all was right, I found that the stupid creature had looped up her sleeves with blue ribbons,

instead of letting her wear the set of coral and gold I had ordered expressly for her. By the time this was corrected, I was, as you may suppose, completely worn out, and made up my mind that I could not see company at all that day. If Miss Stewart called, Horace must meet her in the parlor, and explain matters. Just as I had formed this determination, and resolved, moreover, to send for the doctor if I did not get better very soon, Horace came running up stairs. I felt really sorry at the sight of his great disappointment; yet I could not but think him somewhat inconsiderate when he tried to prevail upon me to alter my plan. 'If I would only let her come up for a few minutes,' he urged, he 'would not ask more than this.' He had seen her down town but an hour previous, and informed her that I was in my usual health. Now, this was perfectly preposterous, for, in addition to the fatigue of talking with a stranger, there was the trying process of dressing. For once, he was obstinate in refusing to see the propriety of my reasoning; and I was worried to the very brink of a hysterical attack, when the conversation was cut short in a truly dramatic manner by John's announcement, 'Miss Stewart!' and, to my unutterable horror, the lady herself was at his heels. What I said or did, I hardly knew then, or can recall now. I have a confused recollection of the touch of her dainty glove, of her fluttering silk flounces and waving white plumes, and that my old wrapper looked shamefully mean by con-

trast with her magnificence. This was my first overwhelming impression ; then, as the hot blood began to retire from my brain and cheeks, I saw more clearly a tall, finely formed woman, dressed in the height of the mode, filling, overflowing with shining silken waves, a chair just opposite to me—a mocking sneer in her eyes that belied the polite accents her lips were forming. I could not complain of any want of attention, for she addressed all her observations to me, in spite of Horace's attempts to divert her notice. In speech, she ignored my disordered dress and deportment ; but each flash of those eyes told me that nothing of all this escaped them, and that, at heart, she triumphed mercilessly in my discomfiture. Blanche was a 'love,' an 'angel,' and the very 'miniature of her mother ;' the chamber was a 'fairy nook, a bower of pleasure, the home of the graces ;' and 'it was easy to divine whose taste had been at work here.' She crushed me with flowers, flung and piled them upon me—musk-roses and other sickening sweets—until I was suffocated into silence. Then, and not until then, when she saw that I was ready to faint under the load of flattery, more intolerable than abuse, did she leave me alone. Horace attended her to the front door, and, returning to the room, rang for the servant who had showed the visitor up. The man excused himself by stating that Miss Stewart had told him we were expecting her, which he supposed to be the truth from something my maid had said in his hearing. Horace

dismissed him, and stood for a minute looking at me—oh, Hatty, with such an expression! a mixture of shame and sorrow I shall never forget—then quitted me without a word. He was absent until tea-time. Dr. Pilson had called three times in the afternoon; and my husband found me sick in bed. No allusion has been made by either of us to the terrible scene of the morning; and he is, if possible, kinder than ever before; but his suffering must have been surpassed only by mine. To live to be a disgrace to him, a source of incessant anxiety, everything except what his wife should be! is not this grief greater than I can bear?"

"Heavier than you should bear," said Hatty, significantly. "Did it ever occur to you that you are exceedingly inconsistent both in language and action?"

"No. How?"

"You would die, you assert, rather than lose your husband's love; yet, when you are acquainted with the means of avoiding this catastrophe, you will not exert yourself to use them, through fear of bringing on one of your celebrated nervous headaches, which, however painful, will not, I am convinced, whatever Dr Pilson may say to the contrary, endanger your life. Positively," she continued, "if any modern Cœlebs were to consult me as to the necessary qualifications of a wife, I should advise him, above all things else, to seek one who never complained of this most fashionable malady. I have no consolation for you, Mary. You know your danger, which I also acknowledge:

and you have a woman's heart. I must go now. Forgive me if I have appeared harsh, unsympathizing."

The tear-sprinkled handkerchief was again pressed to the invalid's face. "I am forsaken! comfortless!" was now her cry.

Miss Dale laid her hand upon her arm, and pointed to Blanche's crib. Through a crack in the shutters darted a solitary sunbeam, falling directly across the babe's coverlet. The little one had probably been awakened by it, and was evidently highly delighted with the bright intruder. Both eager hands were outstretched to grasp the golden pencil that broke into fragments in the dimpled fingers.

"Catch the sunshine," was all Hatty said, as she kissed mother and child.

The nurse entered for her charge; and Mrs. Temple had leisure and solitude in which to ponder upon this last sentence. There was a time when life was steeped in glorious sunlight, such radiance as her soul drank in as its food and delight. She remembered the proud satisfaction of the lover, then of the husband, in her beauty enhanced by the vivacity of youth and happiness; in the quick intellect, now, alas, so perverted! A petted child at home, she brought to her new estate little knowledge of the trials incident to it. Perplexed, harassed, discouraged, it was no marvel that her spirit soon succumbed, and that she was willing to believe the flesh still more weak. She confessed to herself, this morning, what she had often been dimly

conscious of before, that there had been times in the past when reformation would have been easy—when, stimulated by the wifely love which still burned in her bosom, she felt almost persuaded to defy disease, and, more formidable still, doctors; but habit and indolence mastered resolution. “Now”—and with a hopeless sigh, she held up her wasted hands, tremulous as those of palsied age—“what can I do?”

The wedding-ring hung loosely upon its finger. She groaned with the pang that came with the suggested omen. Was the bond it typified, although purer and stronger than gold, slipping from the hearts it united, or growing weaker and thinner from constant abrasion? “Dark! darker than ever!” she murmured. “Nothing is left for me but the night of the grave.”

With the languid pace that had taken the place of her once elastic gait, she tottered, rather than walked, to the window, and opened the blinds. The warm flood poured over the plants, and enlivened the bird, whose thrill of ecstasy proved his instant appreciation of the favor. Struck by the rich coloring of a newly opened azalea, Mrs. Temple bent forwards to examine it more nearly, when her eye fell upon two pale yellow leaves, breaking through the mould on the side of the pot nearest the window. A touch would have crushed them; and their form was yet too indefinite to declare their parentage. They might have derived their being from the superb plant towering

above them, or been the plebeian product of some waif seed, dropped, as sometimes happens in human parterres, in aristocratic earth. Yet each feeble fibre lent all its might to expand its covering towards the light. Need we repeat the lesson taught by the twin leaflets to her who gazed upon them? She had been resigned to a living burial, sinking beneath the mould and dust that self-indulgence was heaping upon every faculty of usefulness; or if, at intervals, spasmodic quickenings, longings for the sunbeams, stirred within her breast, the difficulty of the first step paralyzed them anew. Oh, hers is not the only immortal nature that burrows, and grovels, and languishes out—we cannot say a vegetable existence, for the thousand forms of strength and loveliness, to-day feeding upon air and sunshine, bowing and blooming their thanks to Him who has sent both, forbid the calumnious comparison—but a life that has no parallel in nature, unless we trace a flattered resemblance in the silly sloth, clinging to his tree so long as there remains bark sufficient for his daily sustenance, and wailing out his weak cry at every step towards a new home.

It was long since Mary Temple had thought deeply upon any subject except her own bodily ailments and imaginary grievances; but the touched heart now aided the brain. There, before her frail teacher, she knelt, the sunshine resting, like a blessing, upon her bowed head, and thanked God fervently for the loves of earth, the hopes of heaven, to which her eyes had been so

willfully blinded, and entreated strength to quit her prison cell. She was really wearied by the unwonted excitement of the forenoon, and obliged to lie upon the lounge until within an hour of dinner time; but her husband was surprised to see her open the door as he bounded up stairs—a fleet, soft tread, acquired by months of practice—still more astonished and pleased at the cheerful voice in which she saluted him, and the change in her accustomed dishabille. The dingy worsted wrapper was superseded by one of dark, rich silk, whose pink facings relieved the sallowness of the wearer—a robe hitherto reserved for the very rare occasions deemed important enough to justify the trouble of dressing.

“Are you expecting company, Mary?”

She was listening for the question; yet it caused a sharp twinge of self-reproach. “Only my husband,” was her gentle reply.

He noted the emotion she strove to conceal, and kissed the quivering mouth, his own eyes full of tender feeling. Even in his refusal of her timid petition to be allowed to dine with him, there was such affectionate kindness that she could not feel disappointed. “We must be careful, and not get well too fast,” he said; and both hearts gave a sudden throb at the words.

“Get well?” She repeated them over and over after he had gone, not with the despairing moan in which it was her wont to utter them, but in a trust

that was almost confidence. She had set her face steadfastly towards the light, and the shadows were cast backwards out of her sight.

Brother merchants who passed Horace Temple on his way down street, that afternoon, wondered what successful speculation had given such a rise to his spirits; and his clerks compared notes on the same subject, some of them more than hinting at an extra glass of champagne, which they knew, perhaps better than he, "maketh glad the heart of man."

Several days elapsed before Hatty Dale's next visit. She heard a man's voice as she opened the door of her friend's sitting room; but, relying on the footman's assurance that his mistress was not engaged, she entered. Her impulse was to retreat as she beheld the portly figure of Dr. Pilson: but Mrs. Temple called her forward. "The doctor and I are only having a friendly chat, my dear," she said.

"To which we are more than happy to admit Miss Dale," subjoined the bland physician. "For myself, I regard your coming as particularly opportune. I have such faith in your sound judgment, that I rely upon you to assist me in enlightening our patient here as to the fallacy of a theory she has adopted lately. What think you, Miss Dale, of this gentlest of natures stubbornly resisting the advice of her medical man, and scouting at the science of medicine itself?"

Mrs. Temple smiled brightly; but the answering gleam upon Hatty's face was very faint. "Perhaps

the 'patient' considers that 'patience has had its perfect work,' " she replied, with an attempt at playfulness.

"Let me answer you from the same book," said the doctor, readily: "'Be not weary in well-doing.'"

"I have had very little experience in *well-doing* for eighteen months, doctor," Mrs. Temple interposed. "I hope to tell you a different story before long."

"I wish you may find your system a successful one, madam. Would that I could say 'I *hope* so!' You will hardly believe me"—turning to Hatty—"when I inform you that yesterday noon I met her and Mr. Temple riding out in a sleigh, actually a sleigh! This fragile creature, who, a fortnight since, could not leave her chamber, this tender flower, this mimosa, this"—

"Dormouse!" suggested the quondam invalid, "who, having been most thoroughly awakened by that same sleigh-ride, is very much disposed to repeat the experiment frequently while the snow lasts."

Dr. Pilson arose, dignified, yet polite. "As you judge best, madam," he said, gravely. "My remonstrance was meant in kindness. I have performed my duty. If, at any time, you should need my poor skill, I beg you to let me know. I have always served you to the best of my ability. Heaven forbid that I should ever cease to do this!" And, with this pious ejaculation, he bowed himself out.

"Now, Mary, what does all this mean?" asked

Hatty. "Have you really disobeyed his directions, and to the extent that he says?"

"My study, since your last visit, has been to obey nature and conscience," was the rejoinder. "It is hard work, Hatty—far more arduous than I conceived of when I began it; but, thus far, the 'grace has come with the burden.'"

"And ever will," said her visitor, feelingly.

"I pray that it may, for I am deplorably weak. Twenty times a day I am tempted to abandon the attempt at reform. I seem never before to have understood the meaning of the word 'inertia.' Body and mind are alike averse to the new regimen, for I no longer feed the one with professional dietetics, or the other with morbid musings, nor suffer both to drone for hours and days together. My progress is painfully slow."

"Few great works are accomplished in a day," was Hatty's encouragement; "and you have been sick. Do not fly into the opposite extreme of imagining all your maladies unreal because they have been aggravated by fancies and drugs. I am truly glad to leave you thus, Mary, for I believe you will persevere."

"Leave me?" repeated Mrs. Temple, in some alarm at her voice and manner. "Are you going away?"

"On a long journey, to"—

"To pay a visit?"

"Yes. I have relatives there, and may remain with them until spring," said Hatty, stooping to lift Blanche

from the floor. Her look was so sad that Mrs. Temple forbore to make further inquiry, without suspecting that her melancholy arose from any deeper feeling than natural regret at leaving home and friends for an absence which might be prolonged indefinitely. "Still," she thought, after she had gone, "her present home is not a paradise that she should grieve to leave it. I have often wondered if her cold, worldly aunt could supply the wants of an orphan's heart, and such a heart as hers."

Hatty wrote with tolerable regularity during the winter, but such short, unsatisfactory letters that her correspondent was disposed to think her careless of their friendship or forgetful that the return epistles were penned with difficulty, sometimes with absolute pain. The most sunny day has its clouds, and there were still hours of depression, days of irritability, imperfectly controlled, that shaded Horace's hopeful face and wet the wife's pillow with tears of penitence. The demon Dyspepsia had been too assiduously courted, too tenderly nursed to be exorcised by a single effort. The twin-teachers had exchanged their sickly hue for a dark green, then relapsed slowly into sere second infancy and died meekly in the shadow of the thrifty off-shoots, their ascendants; snow and thaw were gone, fine days were frequent, when exotics and Canary revelled in air as well as sunshine, before our heroine could safely take upon herself the duties of a housekeeper, and venture occasionally into society. More than one card had passed between

Miss Stewart and herself, for, by a succession of mischances, neither had ever found the other at home.

"Have you any engagement this evening, love?" she inquired of her husband one morning, as, in neat wrapper and most becoming cap, she sat behind the coffee-urn.

"None; I am quite at your service," replied he with alacrity, for he was not yet quite used to the delight of possessing a wife who could have evening engagements.

"Then"—blushing a little at her own memories—"if you have no objections, I will invite your friend, Miss Stewart, to take tea with us."

Horace was speechless for a moment in absolute amazement; then, pushing back his chair, walked around to his wife's place, and kissed her as though they had not been married full two years and a half. She could have cried heartily as she hid her face upon the dear shoulder, but she battled bravely with the happy shower, and conquered. A gloriously happy woman she was all that day, for struggles, weariness, self-denial were amply rewarded by the words he had said in her ear, "My noble wife; God bless you!"

Miss Stewart returned a gracious acceptance to Mrs Temple's note of invitation, although not generally partial to quiet tea-drinkings.

"But," she said to her sister, "if this visit proves as rich a farce as the first I made at that house, I shall not suffer for lack of entertainment. Oh, dear!" she

laughed, arranging the picturesque net of crimson and gold in the hair she knew to be one of her chief beauties, while her black eyes flashed back from the mirror their scornful light, "the remembrance of that scene will be fresh in my mind twenty years hence. If I were dying, the picture would excite a smile. My unheralded entrance was a *coup d'état*. I owed Horace Temple a grudge, as you do not need to be told; but from that hour, I have almost forgiven him; I could not have desired a more complete revenge. I suppose we shall sup upon weak tea and Graham bread in that second-story nursery; and that Madame will sport her *recherche* dressing-gown—I verily believe she has worn it by day and by night for the last year; and that her hair has not been thoroughly combed in the same time. And this is the wife of the fastidious man, who, as he once informed me—impertinently enough—had in his early youth formed a standard of womanly excellence which he had never seen approached since, yet was determined not to marry until he did. *Sic transit gloria mundi resolves!*"

Mr. Temple stood ready to welcome the belle at the outer door, and had a most cordial greeting. Then a lady came from the parlor, and the imperturbable woman of fashion was nearly surprised into an exclamation as she spoke the usual phrases of reception due from hostess to guest. A slender figure, with just enough fragility to make it almost ethereal in its grace, attired with exquisite neatness and taste; a face classi-

cally oval, every feature of delicate beauty and illumined by a smile of heart sunshine—these made up the apparition that utterly confounded her. Mrs. Temple saw, and it must be confessed enjoyed, the effect of her appearance. This consciousness of an advantage gained at the outset reassured her to meet the would-be haughty condescension with which Miss Stewart recovered herself. Two or three gentlemen and as many ladies followed her arrival, "just such people as it was an object to cultivate," she said internally, and to this species of agriculture she accordingly addressed her best energies. But, as is often the case, the force brought into action seemed so egregiously disproportionate to the work to be done, that the attempt was ridiculous. She was over-dressed, too talkative, too *prononcé*, as she would have said of another, in modern American too "loud" and "fast" for the refined group, particularly beside, the gentle, lovely lady of the mansion, whose sweet tones, ever ready to fill up the pauses in the conversation, were like flute solos heard in the rests of clarion music. Miss Stewart was a failure, and as this was discovered to be irretrievable, she became ill-natured, what in a plain dowdy would have been rude and snappish. The most pleasant time of the evening to her was when her carriage was announced. Mr. Temple escorted her home. He was in high spirits, "could afford to be," she unwillingly allowed to herself. Her adieux were less elaborate than formerly, and it is to be doubted whether there was much sincerity in her

reciprocation of his hope that they "should see a great deal of her now that Mrs. Temple's health enabled her to partake more freely of the company of her friends."

His wife was sitting in a thoughtful mood by the fire in her room, awaiting his return.

"Bravely done, darling!" he said, merrily. "I have been right proud of my household fairy to-night."

"Almost as well satisfied as if you had married your first love?" was her arch query; but there was anxiety in the eyes so fondly raised to his.

"Better satisfied than if any other woman in the world were my wife." She could not mistake his truthful emphasis. "A million times more pleased than if the queenly Eleanor occupied your place."

"Thank you!"—drawing his brow down to her lips—"thank you! oh, so heartily! Yet, dear Horace, there was a time when she made you sadly ashamed of me."

"Not a word! Nothing you ever did caused me one tithe of the mortification I should feel, this evening, were I her husband. She is a gay humming-bird, brilliant, but spiteful, and fit only for summer weather. Let her pass, Mary. Her gyrations cause but little commotion in our quiet home-nest. A dear and lovely one it is to me."

He did not say: "You, made it so;" but she felt that this was his meaning.

"Darling!"—she started from her reverie at the word and the pressure of his arm, and withdrew her

gaze from the fantastic pictures she was tracing in the coals—"you mentioned my first love a while ago. Have you any idea who she was?"

"I referred to Miss Stewart."

"So I supposed. But I never loved her, never gave her the least intimation of any intention on my part to address her, although I have heard that she numbers me among her slain."

"I am glad to hear that," interrupted his listener—"very glad."

"But I had a 'first love,' notwithstanding," pursued he. "Don't look grieved, and accuse me of a want of frankness towards you, whom you and Heaven are my witnesses I love as well as ever man did a wife. I never thought it expedient to tell you the story until now. Years before the never-to-be-forgotten visit to your native place, which made me acquainted with its fairest ornament, I loved Hatty Dale."

"Hatty Dale!"

"I loved her, and told her so. I was then twenty-two, and an ardent suitor. She, a girl of eighteen, with one of the warmest hearts that ever throbbed or ached, and, as I truly believe, preferring me to all the rest of the world, rejected me decidedly, repeatedly."

"But why?"

Mary flushed with indignation, never considering that this rejection had been the foundation of her wedded bliss.

"For a long time, she would assign no reason for a

course, which, I could see, was fraught with anguish to her as well as to me. At last, in an overflow of emotion, a wild, sweeping flood of sorrow, that left bare the inmost recesses of her soul, she revealed all, a secret which I have kept sacredly until this hour; nor would I disclose it now, even to you, without her expressed desire as my warrant for doing so. I had a letter from her, this afternoon. Its contents I purposely withheld till your company had gone. Hatty's mother, whom she was called to —— to nurse, is dead."

"Her mother? I thought she lost both parents while an infant."

"So says the world, which also reports her to be an only child, adopted by her father's sister. She was taken at an early age, by her present guardian; but she is the youngest of three living children. The others, a brother and sister, much older than herself, are in the insane asylum at ——, where their mother spent the last fifteen years of her life."

Mrs. Temple turned very pale, and burst into tears. Horace was scarcely less agitated.

"This terrible story the noble creature imparted to me as the sole cause of her determined resistance to my proposals. If it effectually extinguished all hope and indeed all desire to make her mine, it also increased my respect, and did not diminish my regard for her. We learned the calmer love of brother and sister, a sentiment which has made me a better man and, I trust, has

brightened her lonely path a little. When I made you my bride, dear one, I bore with me her blessing and prayers. Let her subsequent conduct testify to her nobility of heart, her purity of motive.”

“She has been a blessed sister to me,” said Mary, tearfully. “All that I am this night, all that brings you happiness, under God, I owe to her! My poor Hatty! What a life hers has been!”

“Hear what she writes,” continued Horace: “‘If you think she can bear it, I wish you to tell Mary *everything*. That I have never spoken to her of the fearful cloud which has hung over my head for so long, has not been because I doubted her discretion or friendship, but I dreaded the effect of the communication upon her nerves and spirits. She is stronger now, and perhaps able to hear and sympathize with the distress of one who loves her so truly. But even through this thick darkness pierces one ray of sunshine. It is the thought that in the grave where I have laid my mother—beloved, although I never knew the full meaning of that sweetest of names—in that rest are ended the wanderings, the woes of her troubled spirit—that restored to the serene loveliness of her youth, in the presence of her father and ours, she now ‘sees light.’ And oh, I rejoice to remember that, upon earth, in the deeply sunken vale through which He has decreed my way shall lie, there is no gloom His smile cannot dispel, except when the shadows in which we are enveloped are created by ourselves! May his love keep us from such!’”

MADAME TALLIEN.

WITH a form of wondrous beauty
And of most unrivalled grace,
With a voice of winning sweetness
And a fair and witching face,

From the pleasant paths of girlhood
She came up with joy elate,
And took thoughtlessly upon her
All a matron's care and state.

And we scarce can ever wonder
That her life so careless seems—
She is now but just emerging
From her childhood's thoughtless dreams.

And she has not learned the lesson,
That can only come with years—
That our life is not for pleasure,
But for labor and for tears.

But behold her, by misfortune,
From her height of pleasure hurled ;
Hath she seen how unsubstantial
Are the honors of the world ?



MISS MARY W. L. L. L.

1840

Doth she view her life as something
That was profitless and vain ?
What hath been to her the discipline
Of sorrow and of pain ?

Alas ! that heaviest trial,
Lonely thought, and fiery strife,
Could not change the heart within her,
Nor the purpose of her life.

For she lived by fitful impulse,
Doing sometimes deeds of good ;
Sometimes, in red wine washing
Out the memories of blood.

Reigning as the queen of beauty,
With an undisputed claim ;
Hiding with a crown of roses
All her forehead's crimson shame.

Yet we would not quite condemn her,
Unto perfect infamy,
For she seemed to have within her
Something better than we see.

And she might have added virtue
To her beauty and her grace
If her lines of life had fallen
In a good and pleasant place.

BERTRAM THE LIME-BURNER.

BY NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

BERTRAM the lime-burner, a rough and heavy looking man, begrimed with charcoal, sat watching his kiln at nightfall, while his little son played at building houses with the scattered fragments of marble, when, on the hill-side below them, they heard a roar of laughter, not mirthful, but slow, and even solemn, like a wind shaking the bows of the forest.

"Father, what is that?" asked the little boy, leaving his play, and pressing betwixt his father's knees.

"Oh, some reveller, I suppose," answered the lime-burner; "some merry fellow from the bar-room in the village, who dared not laugh loud enough within doors, lest he should blow the roof of the house off. So, here he is, shaking his jolly sides at the root of Graylock."

"But, father," said the child, more sensitive than the obtuse middle-aged clown, "he does not laugh like a man that is glad; so the noise frightens me!"

"Don't be a fool, child!" cried the father, gruffly; "you will never make a man, I do believe; there is too

much of your mother in you. I have known the rustling of a leaf to startle her. Hark, here comes that merry fellow now. You shall see that there is no harm in him."

Bertram and his little son, while they were talking thus, sat watching the lime-kiln. It was a rude, round, tower-like structure, about twenty feet high, heavily built of rough stones, and with a hillock of earth heaped about the larger part of its circumference, so that the blocks and fragments of marble might be drawn by cart loads and thrown in at the top. There was an opening at the bottom of the tower, like an oven mouth, but large enough to admit a man in a stooping posture, and provided with a massive iron door. With the smoke and jets of flame issuing from the chinks and crevices of this door, which seemed to give admittance into the hill-side, it resembled nothing so much as the private entrance to the infernal regions, which the shepherds of the Delectable Mountains were accustomed to show to pilgrims.

There are many such lime-kilns in that tract of country, for the purpose of burning the white marble, which composes a large part of the substance of the hills. Some of them, built years ago, and long deserted, with weeds growing in the vacant ground of the interior, which is open to the sky, and grass and wild flowers rooting themselves into the chinks of the stones, look already like relics of antiquity, and may yet be over-spread with the lichens of centuries to come. Others,

where the lime-burner still feeds his daily and night-long fire, afford points of interest to the wanderer among the hills, who seats himself on a log of wood or a fragment of marble, to hold a chat with the solitary man. It is a lonesome, and when the character is inclined to thought, may be an intensely thoughtful occupation, as it proved in the case of Ethan Brand, who had mused to some purpose, in days gone by, while the fire in this very kiln was burning.

The man who now watched the fire was of a different order, and troubled himself with no thoughts save the very few that were requisite to his business. At frequent intervals, he flung back the clashing weight of the iron door, and turning his face from the insufferable glare, thrust in huge logs of oak, or stirred the immense brands with a long pole. Within the furnace were seen the curling and riotous flames, and the burning marble, almost molten with the intensity of the heat ; while without, the reflection of the fire quivered on the dark intricacy of the surrounding forest, and showed in the foreground a bright and ruddy little picture of the hut, the spring beside its door, the athletic and coal-begrimed figure of the lime-burner, and the half-frightened child, shrinking into the protection of his father's shadow. And when again the iron door was closed, then re-appeared the tender light of the half-full moon, which vainly strove to trace out the indistinct shapes of the neighboring mountains ; and, in the upper sky, there was a flitting congregation of clouds, still

faintly tinged with the rosy sunset, though this far down into the valley the sunshine had vanished long and long ago.

The little boy now crept still closer to his father, as footsteps were heard ascending the hill-side, had a human form thrust aside the bushes that clustered beneath the trees.

"Halloo! who is it?" cried the lime-burner, vexed at his son's timidity, yet half infected by it. "Come forward and show yourself like a man, or I'll fling this chunk of marble at your head."

"You offer me a rough welcome," said a gloomy voice, as the unknown man drew nigh; "yet I neither claim nor desire a kinder one, even at my own fire-side."

To obtain a distincter view, Bertram threw open the iron door of the kiln, whence immediately issued a gush of fierce light that smote full upon the stranger's face and figure. To a careless eye there appeared nothing very remarkable in his aspect, which was that of a man in a coarse, brown, country-made suit of clothes, tall and thin, with the staff and heavy shoes of a wayfarer. As he advanced, he fixed his eyes—which were very bright—intently upon the brightness of the furnace, as if he beheld, or expected to behold, some object worthy of note within it.

"Good evening, stranger," said the lime-burner: "whence come you so late in the day?"

"I come from my search," answered the wayfarer, "for, at last, it is finished."

"Drunk or crazy!" muttered Bertram to himself. "I shall have trouble with the fellow. The sooner I drive him away the better."

The little boy, all in a tremble, whispered to his father, and begged him to shut the door of the kiln, so that there might not be so much light, for that there was something in the man's face which he was afraid to look at, yet could not look away from. And indeed, even the lime-burner's dull and torpid sense began to be impressed with an indescribable something in that thin, rugged, thoughtful visage, with the grizzled hair hanging wildly about it, and those deeply-sunken eyes, which gleamed like fires within the entrance of a mysterious cavern. But, as he closed the door, the stranger turned towards him, and spoke in a quiet, familiar way, that made Bertram feel as if he were a sane and sensible man after all.

"Your task draws to an end, I see," said he. "This marble has already been burning three days. A few hours more will convert the stone into lime."

"Why, who are you?" exclaimed the lime-burner. "You seem as well acquainted with my business as I am myself."

"And well I may be," said the stranger; "for I followed the same craft many a long year, and here, too, on this very spot. But you are a new comer in these parts. Did you ever hear of Ethan Brand?"

"The man that went in search of the Unpardonable Sin?" asked Bertram, with a laugh

"The same," answered the stranger. "He has found what he sought, and therefore he comes back again."

"What! then you are Ethan Brand himself?" cried the lime-burner in amazement. "I am a new comer here, as you say, and they call it eighteen years since you left the foot of Graylock. But, I can tell you, the good folks still talk about Ethan Brand in the village yonder, and what a strange errand took him away from his lime-kiln. Well, and so you have found the Unpardonable Sin?"

"Even so," said the stranger, calmly.

"If the question is a fair one," proceeded Bertram, "where might it be?"

Ethan Brand laid his finger on his own heart.

"Here!" replied he.

And then, without mirth in his countenance, but as if moved by an involuntary recognition of the infinite absurdity of seeking throughout the world for what was the closest of all things to himself, and looking into every heart save his own, for what was hidden in no other breast, he broke into a laugh of scorn. It was the same slow, heavy laugh that had almost appalled the lime-burner when it heralded the wayfarer's approach.

The solitary mountain-side was made dismal by it. Laughter, when out of place, mistimed, or bursting forth from a disordered state of feeling, may be the most terrible modulation of the human voice. The laughter of one asleep, even if it be a little child; the madman's

laugh, or the wild screaming laugh of an idiot, are sounds that we sometimes tremble to hear, and would always willingly forget. Poets have imagined no utterance of fiends or hobgoblins so fearfully appropriate as a laugh. And even the obtuse lime-burner felt his nerves shake as this strange man looked inwards at his own heart, and burst into laughter that rolled away in the night, and was indistinctly reverberated among the hills.

“Joe,” said he to his little son, “scamper down to the tavern in the village, and tell the jolly fellows there that Ethan Brand has come back, and that he has found the Unpardonable Sin !”

The boy darted away on his errand, to which Ethan Brand made no objection, nor seemed hardly to notice it. He sat on a log of wood, looking steadfastly at the iron door of the kiln. When the child was out of sight, and the swift and light foot-step ceased to be heard treading first on the fallen leaves and then on the rocky mountain path, the lime-burner began to regret his departure. He felt that the little fellow's presence had been a barrier between his guest and himself, and that he must now deal, heart to heart, with a man who, on his own confession, had committed the only one crime for which Heaven could afford no mercy. That crime, in its indistinct blackness, seemed to overshadow him. The lime-burner's own sins rose up within him, and made his memory riotous with a throng of evil shapes that asserted their kindred with the master sin, what-

ever it might be, which it was within the scope of man's corrupted nature to conceive and cherish. They were all of one family ; they went to and fro between his breast and Ethan Brand's and carried dark greetings from one to the other.

Then Bertram remembered the stories which had grown traditionary in reference to this strange man, which had come upon him like the shadow of a night, and was making himself at home in his old place, after so long an absence that the dead people, dead and buried for years, would have had more right to be at home in any familiar spot than he. Ethan Brand, it was said, had conversed with Satan himself in the lurid blaze of this very kiln. The legend had been matter of mirth heretofore, but looked grimly now. According to this tale, before Ethan had departed on his search he had been accustomed to evoke a fiend from the hot furnace of the lime-kiln, night after night, in order to confer with him about the Unpardonable Sin ; the man and the fiend, each laboring to frame the image of some mode of guilt which could neither be atoned for nor forgiven. And, with the first gleam of light upon the mountain top, the fiend crept in at the iron door, there to abide the intensest element of fire, until again summoned forth to share in the dreadful task of extending man's possible guilt beyond the scope of Heaven's else infinite mercy.

While the lime-burner was struggling with the horrors of these thoughts, Ethan Brand rose from the

log and flung open the door of the kiln. The action was in such accordance with the idea in Bertram's mind that he almost expected to see the evil one issue forth red hot from the raging furnace.

"Hold, hold!" cried he, with a tremulous attempt to laugh, for he was ashamed of his fears, although they over-mastered him. "Don't, for mercy's sake, bring out your devil now!"

"Man!" sternly replied Ethan Brand, "what need have I of the devil? I have left him far behind me on my track. It is with such half-way sinners as you that he busies himself. Fear not, because I open the door. I do but act by old custom, and am going to trim your fire like a lime-burner, as I was once."

He stirred the vast coals, thrust in more wood, and bent forwards to gaze into the hollow prison-house of fire, regardless of the fierce glow that reddened upon his face. The lime-burner sat watching him, and half-suspected his strange guest of a purpose, if not to evoke a fiend, at least to plunge bodily into the flames, and thus vanish from the sight of man. Ethan Brand, however, drew quietly back, and closed the door of the kiln.

"I have looked," said he, "into many a human heart that was seven times hotter with sinful passion than your furnace is with fire. But I found not there what I sought. No, not the Unpardonable Sin!"

"What is the Unpardonable Sin?" asked the lime

burner, and then he shrank further from his companion, trembling lest his question should be answered.

"It is a sin that grew within my own breast," replied Ethan Brand, standing erect, with a pride that distinguishes all enthusiasts of his stamp; "a sin that grew nowhere else! The sin of an intellect that triumphed over the sense of brotherhood with man and reverence for God, and sacrificed everything to its own mighty claims! The only sin that deserves a recompense of immortal agony! Freely, were it to do again, would I incur the guilt. Unshrinkingly I accept the retribution!"

"The man's head is turned," muttered the lime-burner to himself. "He may be a sinner, like the rest of us, nothing more likely, but I'll be sworn he's a madman too."

Nevertheless, he felt very uncomfortable at his situation, alone with Ethan Brand on the wild mountain side, and was right glad to hear the rough murmur of tongues and footsteps of what seemed a pretty numerous party, stumbling over the stones and rustling through the under-brush. Soon appeared the whole lazy regiment that was wont to invest the village tavern, comprehending three or four individuals who had drank flip beside the bar-room fire through all the winters, and smoked their pipes beneath the stoop through all the summers, since Ethan Brand's departure. Laughing boisterously and mingling all their voices together in uncereemonious talk,

they now burst into the moonshine and narrow streaks of fire-light that illuminated the open space before the lime-kiln. Bertram set the door ajar again, flooding the spot with light, that the whole company might get a fair view of Ethan Brand, and he of them.

There, among other old acquaintances, was a once ubiquitous man, now almost extinct, but whom we were formerly sure to encounter at the hotel of every thriving village throughout the country. It was the stage agent. The present specimen of the genus was a wilted and smoke-dried man, wrinkled and red nosed, in a smartly-cut brown bob-tailed coat, with brass buttons, who, for a length of time unknown had kept his desk and corner in the bar-room, and was still puffing what seemed to be the same cigar that he had lighted twenty years ago. He had great fame as a dry joker, though, perhaps, less on account of any intrinsic humor, than from a certain flavor of brandy toddy and tobacco smoke, which impregnated all his ideas and expressions, as well as his person.

Another well-remembered, though strangely altered face was that of Lawyer Giles, as people still called him in courtesy—an elderly ragamuffin, in his soiled shirt sleeves and tow-linen trowsers. The poor fellow had been attorney in what he called his better days—a sharp practitioner, and in great vogue among the village litigants; but flip, and sling, and toddy, and cock-tails, imbibed at all hours—morning, noon, and

night—had caused him to slide from intellectual to various kinds and degrees of bodily labor, till at last, to adopt his own phrase, he slid into a soap vat. In other words, Giles was now a soap-boiler in a small way. He had come to be but the fragment of a human being—a part of one foot having been chopped off by an axe, and an entire hand torn away by the devilish grip of a steam-engine. Yet, though the corporeal hand was gone, a spiritual member remained; for, stretching forth the stump, Giles steadfastly averred that he felt an invisible thumb and finger with as vivid a sensation as before the real one was amputated. A maimed and miserable wretch he was; but one nevertheless on whom the world could not trample, and had no right to scorn, either in this or any previous stage of his misfortunes, since he had still kept up the courage and spirit of a man, asked nothing in charity, and with his one hand—and that the left one—fought in stern battle against want and hostile circumstances.

Among the throng, too, came another personage, who, with certain points of similarity to Lawyer Giles, had many more of difference. It was the village doctor, a man of some fifty years, whom, at an earlier period of his life, we should have introduced as paying a professional visit to Ethan Brand, during the latter's supposed insanity. He was now a purpled-visaged, rude and brutal, yet half-gentlemanly figure, with something wild, ruined and desperate in

his talk, and in all the details of his gesture and manners. Brandy possessed this man like an evil spirit, and made him as surly and savage as a wild beast, and as miserable as a lost soul ; but there was supposed to be in him such wonderful skill, such native gifts of healing, beyond any which medical science could impart, that society caught hold of him, and would not let him sink out of its reach. So, swaying to and fro on his horse, and grumbling thick accents at the bedside, he visited all the sick-chambers for miles about among the mountain towns, and sometimes raised a dying man, as it were by a miracle, or quite as often, no doubt, sent his patient to a grave that was dug many a year too soon. The doctor had an everlasting pipe in his mouth : and as somebody said, in allusion to his habit of swearing, it was always alight with hell fire.

The three worthies pressed forward, and greeted Ethan Brand each after his own fashion, earnestly inviting him to partake of the contents of a certain black bottle, in which, as they averred, he would find something far better worth seeking for than the Unpardonable Sin. No mind which has wrought itself, by intense and solitary meditation, into a high state of enthusiasm, can endure this kind of contact with low and vulgar modes of thought and feeling to which Ethan Brand was now subjected. It made him doubt, and, strange to say, it was a painful doubt, whether he had indeed found the Unpardonable Sin.

and found it within himself. The whole question on which he had exhausted life, and more than life, looked like a delusion.

"Leave me," he said bitterly, "ye brute beasts, that have made yourselves so, shrivelling up your souls with fiery liquors! I have done with you. Years and years ago I groped into your hearts and found nothing there for my purpose. Get ye gone!"

"Why, you uncivil scoundrel," cried the fierce doctor, "is that the way you respond to the kindness of your best friends? Then let me tell you the truth. You have no more found the Unpardonable Sin than yonder boy Joe has. You are but a crazy fellow. I told you so twenty years ago; neither better nor worse than a crazy fellow, and the fit companion of old Humphrey here."

He pointed to an old man, shabbily dressed, with long white hair, thin visage and unsteady eyes. For some years past this aged person had been wandering about among the hills, inquiring of all travellers whom he met for his daughter. The girl, it seemed, had gone off with a company of circus performers, and occasionally tidings of her came to the village, and fine stories were told of her glittering appearance as she rode on horseback in the ring or performed marvellous feats on the tight-rope.

The white-haired father now approached Ethan Brand, and gazed unsteadily into his face.

"They tell me you have been all over the earth."

said he, wringing his hands with earnestness. "You must have seen my daughter, for she makes a great figure in the world, and everybody goes to see her. Did she send any word to her old father, or say when she is coming back?"

Ethan Brand's eye quailed beneath the old man's. That daughter, from whom he so earnestly desired a word of greeting, Ethan Brand had made the subject of a psychological experiment, and wasted, and perhaps annihilated her soul in the process.

"Yes," murmured he, turning away from the hoary wanderer, "it is no delusion. There is an Unpardonable Sin!"

While these things were passing, a merry scene was going forward in the area of a cheerful light, beside the spring, and before the door of the hut.

A number of the youth of the village, young men and girls, had hurried up the hill-side, impelled by curiosity to see Ethan Brand, the hero of so many a legend familiar to their childhood. Finding nothing, however, very remarkable in his aspect—nothing but a sunburnt wayfarer in plain garb and dusty shoes, who sat looking into the fire, as if he fancied pictures among the coals, these young people speedily grew tired of observing him. As it happened, there was other amusement at hand. An old German Jew, travelling with a diorama on his back, was passing down the mountain road towards the village just as the party turned aside from it; and in the hopes of eking out

the profits of the day, the showman had kept them company to the lime-kiln.

"Come, old Dutchman," cried one of the young men, "let us see your pictures, if you can swear they are worth looking at."

"Oh, yes, captain," answered the Jew—whether as a matter of courtesy or craft, he styled everybody captain—"I shall show you, indeed, some very superb pictures!"

So, placing the box in a proper position, he invited the young men and girls to look through the glass orifices of the machine, and proceeded to exhibit a series of the most outrageous scratchings and daubings, as specimens of the fine arts, that ever an itinerant showman had the face to impose upon his circle of spectators. The pictures were worn out, moreover—tattered, full of cracks and wrinkles, dingy with tobacco smoke, and otherwise in a most pitiable condition. Some purported to be the cities, public edifices and ruined castles in Europe; others represented Napoleon's battles and Nelson's sea fights; and in the midst of these might be seen a gigantic, brown, hairy hand, which might have been mistaken for the hand of destiny, though in truth it was only the showman pointing his forefinger to various scenes of the conflict, while its owner gave historical illustrations. When, with much merriment at its abominable deficiency of merit, the exhibition was concluded, the German bade little Joe put his head into the box. Viewed through the magnifying glasses, the boy's round

rosy visage assumed the strangest imaginable aspect of an immense Titanic child, the mouth grinning broadly, and the eyes and every other feature overflowing with fun at the joke. Suddenly, however, that merry face turned pale, and its expression turned to horror, for this easily impressed and excitable child had become sensible that the eyes of Ethan Brand were fixed upon him through the glass.

"You make the little man to be afraid, captain," said the German Jew, turning up the dark and strong outline of his visage from his stooping posture. "But look again, and, by chance, I shall cause you to see something that is very fine, upon my word!"

Ethan Brand gazed into the box for an instant, and then starting back, looked fixedly at the German. What had he seen? Nothing, apparently; for a curious youth, who had peeped in almost at the same moment, beheld only a vacant space of canvas.

"I remember you, now," muttered Ethan Brand to the showman.

"Ah, captain," whispered the Jew of Nuremburg, with a dark smile, "I find it to be a heavy matter in my show-box—this Unpardonable Sin! By my faith, captain, it has wearied my shoulders this day to carry it over the mountain."

"Peace!" answered Ethan Brand, sternly, "or get thee into the furnace yonder."

The Jew's exhibition had scarcely concluded, when a great elderly dog—who seemed to be his own master, as

no person in the company laid claim to him—saw fit to render himself the object of public notice. Hitherto he had shown himself as a very quiet, well-disposed old dog, going round from one to another, and, by way of being sociable, offering his rough head to be patted by any kindly hand that would take so much trouble. But now, all of a sudden this grave and venerable quadruped, of his own mere motion, and without the slightest suggestion from anybody else, began to run round after his tail, which, to heighten the absurdity of the scene, was a great deal shorter than it should have been. Never was seen such headlong eagerness in pursuit of an object that could not possibly be attained ; never was heard such a tremendous outbreak of growling, snarling, barking and snapping, as if one end of the ridiculous brute's body were at deadly and most unforgivable enmity with the other. Faster and faster round about went the cur, and faster and still faster fled the unapproachable brevity of his tail, and louder and fiercer grew his yells of rage and animosity, until utterly exhausted, and as far from the goal as ever, the foolish old dog ceased his performance as suddenly as he had begun it. The next moment he was as quiet, mild, sensible, and respectable in his deportment as when he first scraped acquaintance with the company.

As may be supposed, the exhibition was greeted with universal laughter, clapping of hands, and shouts of "Encore," to which the canine performer responded by wagging all that there was to wag of his tail, but

appeared totally unable to repeat his very successful effort to amuse the spectators.

Meanwhile, Ethan Brand had resumed his seat upon the log, and moved, it might be, by a perception of some remote analogy between his own case and that of this self-pursuing cur, he broke into the awful laugh which, more than any other token, expressed the condition of his inward being. And at that moment the merriment of the party was at an end; they stood about, dreading lest the inauspicious sound should be reverberated around the horizon, and that mountain would thunder it to mountain, and so the sound be prolonged upon their ears. Then, whispering to one another that it was late; that the moon was almost down; that the August night was growing chill, they hurried homewards, leaving the lime-burner and little Joe to deal as they might with their unwelcome guest. Save for these three human beings, the open space on the hill-side was a solitude, set in a vast gloom of forest. Beyond that darksome verge, the fire-lights glimmered on the stately trunks and almost black foliage of pines, intermixed with the lighter verdure of sapling oaks maples and poplars, while here and there lay the gigantic copses of trees, decaying on the leaf-strewn soil. And it seemed to little Joe—a timorous and imaginative child—that the silent forest was holding its breath until some fearful thing should happen.

Ethan Brand thrust more wood into the fire, and closed the door of the kiln; then looking over his

shoulder at the lime-burner and his son, he bade, rather than advised, them to retire to rest.

"For myself, I cannot sleep," said he; "I have matters that it concerns me to meditate upon. I will watch the fire, as I used to do in the old time."

"And call the devil out of the furnace to keep you company, I suppose," muttered Bertram, who had been making intimate acquaintance with the black bottle above mentioned. "But watch if you like, and call as many devils as you like! For my part, I shall be all the better for a snooze. Come, Joe!"

As the boy followed his father into the hut, he looked back at the wayfarer, and tears came into his eyes. for his tender spirit had an intuition of the bleak and terrible loneliness in which this man had enveloped himself.

When they were gone, Ethan Brand sat listening to the crackling of the kindled wood, and looking at the spirits of fire that issued through the chinks of the door. These trifles, however, once so familiar, had but the slightest hold of his attention, while deep within his mind he was reviewing the gradual but marvellous change that had been wrought upon him by the search to which he had devoted himself. He remembered how the night dew had fallen upon him; how the dark forest had whispered to him; how the stars had gleamed upon him, a simple and loving man, watching his fire in the years gone by, and even musing as it burned. He remembered with what tenderness, with what love and

sympathy for mankind, and what pity for human guilt and woe he had first begun to contemplate those ideas which afterwards became the inspiration of his life ; with what reverence he had then looked into the heart of man, viewing it as a temple originally divine, and, however desecrated, still to be held sacred by a brother with what awful fear he had deprecated his pursuit, and prayed that the Unpardonable Sin might never be revealed to him. Then ensued that vast intellectual development, which, in its progress, disturbed the counterpoise between his mind and heart.

The idea that possessed his life had operated as a means of education ; it had raised him from the level of an unlettered laborer, to stand on a star-light laden eminence, whither the philosophers of the earth, with the lore of the universe, might vainly strive to clamber after him. So much for the intellect ! But where was the heart ? That, indeed, had withered, had contracted, had hardened, had perished ? It had ceased to partake of the universal throb. He had lost hold of the magnetic chain of humanity. He was no longer a brother man, opening the chambers or the dungeons of our common nature by the key of holy sympathy, which gave him a right to share in all its secrets ; he was now a cold observer, looking on mankind as the subject of his experiment, and at length converting man and woman to be his puppets, and pulling the wires that moved them to such degrees of crime as were demanded for his study.

Thus Ethan Brand became a fiend. He began to be so from the moment that his moral nature had ceased to keep the pace of improvement with his intellect. And now, as his highest effort, and inevitable development—as the bright and gorgeous flower, and rich, delicious fruit of his life's labor—he had discovered the Unpardonable Sin.

“What more have I to seek? What more to achieve?” said Ethan Brand to himself. “My task is done, and well done!”

Starting from the log with a certain alacrity in his gait, and ascending the hillock of earth that was raised against the stone circumference of the lime-kiln, he thus reached the top of the structure. It was a space of perhaps ten feet across, from edge to edge, presenting a view of the upper surface of the immense mass of broken marble with which the kiln was heaped. All these innumerable blocks and fragments of marble were red hot and vividly on fire, sending up great spouts of blue flame, which quivered aloft and danced madly, as within a magic circle, and sank and rose again, with continual and multitudinous activity. As the lonely man bent forwards over this terrible body of fire, the blasting heat smote up against his person with a breath that, it might be supposed, would have scorched and shrivelled him up in a moment.

Ethan Brand stood erect, and raised his arms on high. The blue flame played upon his face, and im-

parted the wild and ghastly light which alone could have suited his expression ; it was that of a fiend on the verge of plunging into his gulf of intensest torment.

“ Oh, Mother Earth,” cried he, “ who art no more my mother, and into whose bosom this frame shall never be resolved ? Oh, mankind, whose brotherhood I have cast off and trampled thy great heart beneath my feet ! Oh, stars of heaven, that shone on me of old, as if to light me onwards and upwards ! Farewell all, and forever ! Come deadly element of fire, henceforth my familiar friend ! Embrace me as I do thee ! ”

That night the sound of a fearful peal of laughter rolled heavily through the sleep of the lime-burner and his little son ; dim shapes of horror and anguish haunted their dreams, and seemed still present in the rude hovel when they opened their eyes to the daylight.

“ Up boy, up ! ” cried the lime-burner, staring about him. “ Thank Heaven, the night is gone at last ; and rather than pass another such, I would watch my lime-kiln, wide awake, for a twelvemonth. This Ethan Brand, with his humbug of an Unpardonable Sin, has done me no such mighty favor in taking my place.”

He issued from the hut, followed by little Joe, who kept fast hold of his father’s hand. The early sunshine was already pouring its gold upon the moun-

tain tops, and though the valleys were still in shadow, they smiled cheerfully in the promise of the bright day that was hastening onwards. The village, completely shut in by hills, which swelled away gently about it, looked as if it had rested peacefully in the hollow of the great hand of Providence. Each dwelling was distinctly visible; the little spires of the two churches pointed upwards, and caught a foreglimmering of brightness from the sun-gilt skies upon their weathercocks. The tavern was astir, and the figure of the old smoke-dried stage agent, cigar in mouth, was seen beneath the stoop. Old Graylock was glorified with a golden cloud upon his head. Scattered likewise upon the breasts of the surrounding mountains there were heaps of hoary mists, in fantastic shapes, some of them far down in the valley, others high up towards the summits, and still others of the same family of mist and clouds, hovering in the golden radiance of the upper atmosphere. Stepping from one to another of the clouds that rested on the hills, and thence to the loftier brotherhood that sailed in the air, it seemed almost as if mortal man might thus ascend into the heavenly regions. Earth was so mingled with sky that it was a day-dream to look at it.

To supply that charm of the familiar and homely which nature so readily adopts into a scene like this, the stage-coach was rattling down the mountain road, and the driver sounding his horn, while each caught

up the notes and intertwined them into a rich and varied and elaborate harmony, of which the original performer could lay claim to little share. The great hills played a concert among themselves, each contributing a strain of airy sweetness.

Little Joe's face brightened at once.

"Dear father," cried he, skipping cheerily to and fro, "that strange man is gone, and the sky and the mountains all seem glad of it!"

"Yes," growled the lime-burner, with an oath, "but he has let the fire go down, and no thanks to him, if five hundred bushels of lime are not spoilt. If I catch the fellow hereabouts again, I shall feel like tossing him into the furnace!"

With his long pole in his hand, he ascended to the top of the kiln. After a moment's pause, he called to his son:

"Come up here, Joe!" said he.

So little Joe ran up the hillock and stood by his father's side. The marble was burnt into perfect, snow-white lime. But, on its surface, in the midst of the circle—snow-white too, and thoroughly converted into lime—lay a human skeleton, in the attitude of a person who, after long toil, lies down to a long repose. Within the ribs—strange to say—was the shape of a human heart.

"Was the fellow's heart made of marble?" cried Bertram, in some perplexity at this phenomenon. "At any rate, it is burnt into what is called special good

lime ; and, taking all the bones together, my kiln is half a bushel the richer by him."

So saying, the rude lime-burner lifted his pole, and letting it fall upon the skeleton, the relics of Ethan Brand were crumbled into fragments.

MADAME JUNOT.

DUCHESS D'ALBRANTES.

FROM her mother earth's kind bosom,
Once a vine with tender blossom
Lifted up its pretty head.
Glad within, how glad without her,
Seemed the world that lay about her
With its sunshine overspread.

In her loveliness and meekness,
Knowing all her nature's weakness,
And that she alone must fall ;
Said she, " This can be no longer,
I must lean on something stronger,
If I grow or live at all.

" All these trees that stand about me
Are but rugged things without me,
Wherefore should I be afraid ?
If I well perform my duty,
If I bring them grace and beauty,
Surely they will give me aid."



MISS J. J. J.

So she listened to the proffer
Of an ancient tree, whose offer,
Met her first appealing look ;
To him all her sweetness bringing,
With her tendrils round him clinging,
She all other aid forsook.

But alas! the mournful sequel,
Proves that unions so unequal
Never in the world are blest.
She could neither change nor cover
The defects of such a lover—
Neither bless him, nor be blest.

Captive only for an hour,
Soon a bolder brighter flower
Stronger cords about him wound
And that young vine of a summer,
Pushed off by the fair new-comer
Fell unheeded to the ground.

Lady, with this old true story,
Of mistaken trust before thee,
And of that poor blossom's fate,
Couldst thou not take solemn warning
Nor prepare in life's young morning,
For repentance, were too late?

Vain example, vain adviser,
Still the world will grow no wiser,
Still along our way we meet
Those from whose unpitying bosom
Has fallen off the tender blossom,
That lies broken at their feet.

A MULE RIDE IN MADEIRA.

BY METTA VICTORIA VICTOR.

CHAPTER I.

ISABEL BERTHIERS' chamber overlooked the sea. It looked also to the south and west ; so that, from childhood, she was accustomed to those never-tiring, ever-changing splendors which accompany the setting of the moon and sun. The silver car of the young moon, riding down into the deep, and the purple and golden magnificence curtained about the horizon, and reflected in the ocean, were sights for which she waited. Her chamber was in a corner tower of her father's castle, for so the neighbors called the great, irregular stone mansion standing upon the shore, its turrets and battlements rising up from their rocky foundations, and mirrored, at times, in the waters at their base. Her window at the west had a balcony which overhung the waves forever sighing at the foot of the rock from which the tower uprose. At the south, it held in view a garden of many acres, rich with the fruits and flowers of the north

and south—the apple and orange leaning cheek to cheek, and everything beautiful, in the vegetation of two hemispheres, flourishing kindly in the Eden-like climate which distinguishes the island of Madeira. This magic climate, and all these “sweet influences” which encircled her in a peculiar atmosphere of beauty and love, had conspired, with birth and education, to make her in mind and spirit as singularly beautiful as she was in person.

When Isabel was about two years of age, her father had brought to this lovely home his young wife, dying of consumption, in the eager hope that the mild temperature of the island, so free from the sudden changes which had chilled her life in England, might restore the health so precious to him. But the fair rose only renovated her bloom for a brief period, again to droop, and soon to perish, leaving him the forlornest mourner in the world, save for the comfort of the little bud its parent had left to his care. He could never make up his mind to return to his former busy habits of life in London, but had stayed on, from year to year, in the paradise hallowed by the last word and smile of her he had lost. Her mother’s grave, smiling with every beauty which love could win from nature to adorn it, lay in view from Isabel’s south window, consecrating the whole garden to tenderness and reverence. What a wilderness that garden was, where angels might have delighted to lose themselves in its profusion of sweets!

Isabel loved to sit on her balcony and watch the

ships coming up from the horizon, their glimmering sails bearing steadily on into nearer view, until they made the port of the city of Funchal, just out of whose suburbs she dwelt. These "white-winged messengers" were full of poetry to her. She did not think of the rough sailor-life on board. They were all like carrier-doves from flying, every region of the earth, and bearing beneath their wings messages and treasures.

One day, she sat on her balcony, now reading a little, and now looking off on the ocean, when a light cloud, rising from the horizon, fixed her attention; and she soon resolved it into the smoke of a steamer, which puffed steadily into sight, until it anchored about half a mile out of Funchal.

"Letters and books for papa from his friends in England, I hope," said Isabel, as she lifted a small glass which lay by her side. "But no! very likely there is none, for those are the stars and stripes of America which flutter from the mast. How much uglier," she continued to muse, "those steamships are than the slower, less certain, but more graceful sail vessels! There never *can* be anything romantic about a steamer—of course not!"—with a shrug of her lovely shoulders—"while Argo, and all her legitimate descendants, are full of poetry. But these ungainly things, with their horrible smoke-pipes and their business-like air!" And the girl returned to her book without a single thrill of her happy heart to tell her that, within that same "ungainly steamer," which "never *could* be romantic,"

all the romance of her life was awaiting its evolution.

By the time her father returned from his daily visit to town, she had forgotten to inquire even if there was any news ; but, as she glanced out once again upon the moonlit splendor of the sea, just before she resigned herself to the slumber of health and innocence, she saw the glimmering folds of the American flag stretched out to embrace the breeze which blew from land, perfumed with the dewy incense of a million flowers. Perhaps the young engineer, who had stolen upon deck to enjoy the magical beauty of the scene, as an odor of roses wafted by him on silent wings, and floated away forever, was as far from dreaming from what garden that incense came, as was the maiden from thinking over whose head fluttered that graceful banner.

The next day, Isabel was in one of those restless moods, when, from very excess of youthful spirits, she could not decide upon how to amuse herself. She had taken her usual siesta ; and her father would not be home until sunset. In the chamber adjoining her own, there was an old-fashioned bureau filled with finery which had once adorned her mother. Isabel kept the keys of the drawers, for there were stores of costly jewels, and laces of great intrinsic value, besides their priceless worth as the ornaments which had once heightened the beauty of the beloved dead. Isabel was too youthful ever to appropriate any of these things to her wear ; but she had, more than once, stolen an hour

of glory in them, with her mirror and her dressing-maid for her only admirers. Upon this occasion, having begun and ended half a dozen different employments, she bethought herself of the bureau and its contents. "Come, now, Florette," she laughed, "and change me into an old-fashioned English girl. I want you to dress my hair precisely like mamma's in this portrait. I wish to see if I will not look like her. Papa thinks I resemble her so much."

"Ah, yes! I think you are the image of that picture, mademoiselle. They do say your mother was very beautiful."

Isabel received this rather undisguised flattery of her French maid with the nonchalance of a gay heart that has not yet learned to crave admiration as its sweetest food.

"Well, let us see how much skill you have, Florette. But first let me get the jewel-box; for you will need the pins to fasten my hair. Mother has some rose-buds in hers, too. Run, Florette, and bring those I just put in the vase. They say that my mother was passionately fond of flowers—that she always kept them about her person," she mused, as she took her seat in a small cushioned chair before the glass, and awaited the return of the girl with the roses.

In a brief time, by the ready and loving art of Florette, the curls, which usually floated at will upon her shoulders, were arranged like those of the portrait—a rich mass of them twisted in a coil at the back of her

head, and the rest looped back from the delicate temples, and fastened in clusters behind the ears, so as to drop about the neck and bosom. Three large pins, the heads of which were formed of pink topazes, richly set about with pearls, held these in place ; while a dainty rose-bud, with its green leaves, shone out here and there amid the dark luxuriance of tresses.

“ And now the dress—the very same dress !” cried Isabel.

Her simple white robe was cast aside ; and the heavy brocaded silk, of a pale rose-color, was taken from its resting-place, and its folds shaken out.

“ *Ah, ciel !*” cried Florette, “ how exquisite—*charmant !*” when her youthful mistress had donned the dress to her satisfaction.

Truly, it was very becoming, with its rich trimmings of thread-lace falling like mist about the white shoulders and dimpled arms of the wearer. It was very short in the waist, and the belt which girdled it fastened in front with a jewelled brooch of the same style as the hair-pins. In front, the skirt was short enough to give glimpses of the small feet in their rose-colored slippers ; and behind was a small train trimmed with costly lace. There was a brooch, also, with which Isabel fastened a moss-rose in the bosom ; and small clasps to loop up the wide lace flounces of the sleeves. Then there were bracelets for the arms, and a lustrous necklace.

“ One would say the portrait was alive, and had come out of its frame, and walked about the room,”

exclaimed the maid, with all kinds of lively French gesticulations. "You ought to show yourself to Monsieur Berthiers, when he returns. You are the image of your mother."

"Ah, no! I would not dare to do that!" replied Isabel, a pensive shade passing over her brilliant countenance. "It would startle him too much; it would grieve him; for he would remember how my mother wore this very dress the night upon which they were betrothed. And they were so happy! and my poor mamma died so young! Perhaps I, too, shall perish just when I am the gayest and happiest."

"Heaven prevent it!" ejaculated Florette, fervently.

The next moment, the young girl smiled.

"It is not so bad to die, after all, if it were not for leaving one's friends. I do not see why we should dread it. But I am certainly too happy to think of death this afternoon. Papa will not be home until sunset; and I shall wear these things until I see him coming. I fancy myself a different person from little Isabel Berthiers."

After flitting about the house for awhile, she took up her station in the veranda, a modern addition to the old castle, rendered desirable in that beautiful climate, where people almost lived in the open air. Here she sat, enjoying the simple luxury of breathing and living where the air was delicious, the earth lovely, and the heavens serene. On either side, separated only by

their extensive grounds, the boundaries of which were marked by hedges of rose and myrtle, or by low walks, were the villas of her neighbors. In front, the picturesque road, winding amid thickets of bloom—where the geranium climbed amid the dark green of the chestnut and the orange flourished beside the Norway pine, and vineyards lay scattered amid them all—led away and ascended the mountains which stood in full view, the luxurious greenness of their wooded heights broken by silvery glimpses of cascades and the cool grey of rocks.

Isabel's thoughts, like her eyes, had ascended from height to height, until she was finally gazing into the blue sky, and dreaming of her mother's home there, with many more earthly fancies mingled up in her vision, as the odors of flowers were mingled up in air, when her reverie was interrupted by the sight of a party of horsemen dashing at reckless speed down the mountain side, and sweeping forwards upon the plain with a merry clamor of shouts and laughter, which grew louder as they came within closer hearing. They appeared to be a party of foreigners who had been ascending the Corral, visiting the church of Our Lady of the Mount and the Barra, and were evidently young and wild, for they dashed ahead with a noisy disregard of the appalled faces and warning gestures of their guides, who struggled in vain to keep near them.

"Americans, I have no doubt!" murmured Isabel,

as she watched their mad career. "They are so reckless!"

She was considerably surprised when, as they came opposite the house, two of the party diverged from the road, and, allowing the others to pass on, checked their steeds before the stone lions who kept watch over the portals of the gate. They waited until their grooms came up, and, throwing the reins to them, entered, and passed along the walk, still laughing and talking, rather too loudly, Isabel thought; and the indignant blood rushed to her cheeks. It was evident that they did not observe her, her seat being sheltered by a vine-wreathed column, for one of them exclaimed, almost as they placed their feet on the veranda: "A paradise! a perfect paradise! It ought to have its Peri."

"Hush! there she is—your Peri—now," almost whispered the other.

If the young girl had felt half indignant at their previous merriment, she could scarcely check a saucy smile now at the sudden change in their demeanor as they came into her subduing presence. She arose, in all the glory of her jewelled attire, and the still greater glory of her unequalled beauty, and greeted them with a slight bend of the head. They were astonished, almost to embarrassment, and plainly were not certain whether they had chanced upon the Peri they were speaking of, or a mortal. Yet the dress was hardly appropriate to a *bonâ fide* Peri; besides, she had no wings, as they could see; neither was it that of any of the

Portuguese, French, or English ladies they had seen at Madeira ; and it was very gorgeous to be spending a solitary hour of the day in.

The roguish dimple that just peeped, and then retreated from the corners of her mouth, was the first thing which restored them to their powers of speech. It acted like an electric shock upon the foremost of the intruders, who, bringing his arms suddenly up, and removing the hat from his head, with a bow as graceful in its way as her own, said : " Pardon our intrusion. We have been up the mountain, and, being almost dead with thirst and fatigue, ventured to call and beg for a glass of water."

" You *seemed* to be very much exhausted, I thought, as you came along," replied the young girl, with a mock gravity, which brought a flush to his brown cheek as he recalled the manner of his entrance upon the stage of her observation. However, he smiled—a frank, confessing smile, which won a merry response from the maiden, and they were friends without further apology.

" I am sorry my father is not at home to make you welcome, gentlemen," continued Isabel ; " but if you will take seats for a moment, I will order a servant to attend you."

She motioned to a rustic sofa, which stood between two pillars, and disappeared in the hall, her silken train sweeping grandly after her.

I should call this an adventure worthy of the scene," whispered one to the other, as they seated themselves.

* What manner of youthful dame or princess may this be? I shall begin to think that we are on an enchanted island."

His companion did not answer him. He was the one who had addressed the young girl; and he now sat staring at the door where she had disappeared. Those deep blue eyes, whose smiles he had so unexpectedly encountered, were too much like the ideal eyes which had floated before his imagination for years for their light not to pierce into his soul. So he sat in stupid silence, staring at space, but seeing before him that exquisite vision of youthful womanhood. She was of a type of beauty, as rare as it was excellent when found—the delicate perfection of features peculiar to the north, softened by the rich hues, the warmth, the grace of the south. Her demeanor, like her beauty, was her own—of no class or nation—full of interest and intangible charms of modesty, youth, and unconscious loveliness.

In a few moments, a servant parted the Venetian shutters of a window which opened upon the veranda, and asked them into a cool, high room, but lightly furnished as a summer apartment. Here, upon a table, were baskets of fruit gathered from the profuse variety of the garden, and flasks of native wine, mellow and luscious with age. With that unstudied hospitality so delightfully practised by many southern people, the young lady honored the impromptu entertainment with her own presence, and pressed its acceptance upon her

stranger guests, who were in no way loth to prolong the time by dallying with the fruits which they praised as they ate.

“If you only knew, mademoiselle,” said the younger and more fascinated of the two, again recovering the use of his speech, “the weariness, the intolerable sameness and *ennui* of an ocean voyage of three months, varied by but one visit to *terra firma*, you would be tempted to excuse the boisterous spirits which refused to be quelled when, on this first day of our release from shipboard, we found ourselves breathing this exhilarating atmosphere, and entranced by the beauty of this island—doubly beautiful to us, who have been so long out of sight of trees and flowers. These oranges and pears, you may guess, have an added sweetness, after the salt rations of the past few weeks. I declare to you, when we *came* tumbling down the hill-side, I was like one intoxicated upon ambrosia; and I do not know when I should have regained my senses, had I not become suddenly aware of intruding my merriment upon a lady. In short,” he added with a pleasant laugh, “I believe I am not quite in my senses yet.” And his fine eyes rested upon Isabel with respectful admiration, which hinted what he was not at liberty to say.

“Well, messieurs,” answered the young girl, “it makes me happy to see others so happy. A long voyage must indeed be a monstrous affair. The truth is that I, too, have been on a frolic to day; and I did not dream that I was to be caught”——

Here Florette thrust her head in at the door, and called out, nervously: "Miss Isabel! your father is coming! He is on the veranda now!" And, without waiting for a word of apology, their young hostess fled from the room as if terrified; and they saw her no more that day.

CHAPTER II.

That same evening, Mark Summers, 2d Assistant Engineer of the United States steamship "America," was leaning over the side of the vessel, gazing steadily towards the land. The odors of roses, which were occasionally wafted across his senses, had a deeper meaning than they had possessed for him the previous evening—for did not the light wind blow directly from a certain garden by the sea-shore, where—who knows?—*she* might even at that moment be wandering? And he murmured some lines from one of his favorite poets:—

"There fell a silver, silken veil of light
 Upon the upturned faces of a thousand
 Roses, which grew in an enchanted garden,
 Where no wind dared to stir, unless on tip-toe—
 Fell on the upturned faces of these roses,
 That gave out, in return for the love-light,
 Their odorous souls in an ecstatic death—
 Fell on the upturned faces of these roses
 That smiled and died in this parterre, *enchanted*
By thee, and by the poetry of thy presence."

Here his friend and companion, who had shared with him the adventure of the day, came up, and tapped him on the shoulder.

"I say, man, I have found out all about her. Now, *you*, who are too deeply interested to betray yourself by inquiring, ought to be much obliged to me."

"Found out about whom, Harry?"

"Please *don't* affect such coolness. Her first name is Isabel. Her father's we already know, and that he is a wealthy Englishman residing on the island. He was very courteous to us, in his own house, as any gentleman would be; but I have no doubt that he is as proud as Lucifer, and would put a quick stop to any attempt of a couple of poor engineers becoming acquainted with his daughter. Although she is but eighteen, she is already known as the Beauty of Madeira. She is Mr. Berthiers' only child, and his idol."

"I hope he does not tyrannize over her," said Mark. "I wonder what caused her flight and trepidation at the mere mention of his coming to-day. Perhaps he does not allow her to speak with any men but himself."

"They say he lets her have her own way entirely. What caused her abrupt departure I am sure I cannot guess. But I have an idea. We have not spent all our idle hours upon our music, for the last few months, to put it to no good use. We can see from here how directly overlooking the sea her father's house is; and I am told that her own chamber is in the tower which juts out upon the rock. So, for a serenade! The ship's gig

is at our service. We will invite some of the superior officers and Tom with his flute. Serenading the beauty of Madeira, by moonlight, in a boat beneath her balcony, will not be a bad occupation for a couple of young American Adventurers. What say?"

No sooner proposed than executed. The sailors got out the boat; and those officers who were not already gone ashore were invited to join in the excursion. In less than an hour, the plash of their oars was heard at the foot of the rock; and a strain of rich music, from three or four instruments exquisitely played, floated up into the castle.

There was a glimmer of white drapery upon the balcony, a fair hand reaching over the balustrade; and, at the end of the first piece, a bouquet dropped through the moonlight, and fell in the water near the boat. Mark Summers nearly lost his balance, and was in danger of falling overboard in his eagerness to be the one to seize the prize. He secured it, and fastened it in his button-hole, resisting the passionate impulse which he felt to press it to his lips, for he did not wish to excite the ridicule of his companions.

"Don't cherish that too fondly, Mark," laughed Harry, "for most likely it was the gift of the pretty waiting-maid whom we saw in attendance upon her mistress."

Mark secretly repelled the idea with scorn. Could his spiritual apprehension be at fault when it whispered him so loudly that *her* fingers had contrived the cunning

arrangement of these flowers, and *her* breath had mingled with their perfume? No! And he slept that night with the bouquet in his bosom, doubly assured of its origin by the "thanks, messieurs," which, faint as a dream, came, wafted in silvery cadence, from the balcony, as the last strain had ceased, and the boatmen resumed their oars.

We have said that he slept; but it was not until after hours of restless musing that he lost himself in slumber; for the day had marked an era in his life. He had met the embodiment of all the sweet hopes of his youth; and under what discouraging circumstances! He might just as well have fallen desperately enamored of some star in the sky above him. She was an heiress; and her father was a haughty Englishman, who despised most likely, the very name of self-made merit. His ship was to stop but five days at Funchal, and then was to leave that, to him, heavenly home, for a long cruise by distant shores. Only five days, and no means of procuring an introduction to her father's house. Certainly, there was nothing to do but to forget the vision which haunted him. Easy task! He smiled sardonically at the thought.

The next morning, he was in rather a dangerous humor—dangerous to himself and his advancement, for he was in just that haughty and unhappy mood when he would not have borne a word or a look from the highest officer on the ship, which could have affronted his personal dignity. And such affronts had not hitherto been

unknown. His proud spirit had been often chafed by the insolence of his superiors ; and he had just that spark of American independence in his nature which threatened to ignite, and explode a magazine of wrath. He was a young man striving to raise himself, by the force of his own talents and indomitable will, to an honored position. United with fine gifts of imagination and poetry, he had also the genius for mechanical invention and construction, which promised, though less pleasing to his fancy, more immediate reward in worldly emolument and respect. So, being poor, and not at liberty to disregard the more profitable view of the matter, he had decided upon engineering as a profession for the next few years of his life, and had gone into the navy as a suitable field for his labor, as being a place where his undoubted talents would find recognition—and also a little, perhaps, from that love of travel and adventure so common to imaginative natures. He had not anticipated some of the trials of his position to a fiery and honorable spirit like his own ; for he had not dreamed of the supercilious contempt and even unmanly rudeness which he would be subjected to by those superior to him in rank. We do not wish to impugn the dignity of all the officers in the United States Navy, or the British, or any other navy ; but, that arrogance, meanness, and petty tyranny rule absolutely in many of those isolated little kingdoms called ships of war cannot be doubted.

Mark Summers almost hoped, that morning, that somebody *would* insult him, so that he could resent it,

and be dismissed from the service, and, consequently, be at liberty to stop at Madeira as long as he pleased ; and the rest he would leave to fate. He could not freeze or starve in that island of profusion and warmth. And something might happen ! Thus foolish was he, in the first wildness of his passion ; and thus foolish has many a sensible man been under the influence of the same bewitching dream. But no one insulted him ; and he insulted no one. The day was so beautiful, and the stopping in port so delightful to all, that no one felt disposed to quarrel. On the contrary, he was politely invited by the first lieutenant to join a party who were going to call upon an American friend of his, residing at Funchal ; and they spent a pleasant morning at his house, the pleasure being enhanced by an invitation to all to return in the evening, and meet some of the society of the town. A brilliant gathering was anticipated by the officers, who were in high spirits in anticipation of the event ; and no heart beat so quickly at the prospect as did that of the 2d Assistant Engineer. Isabel Berthiers would be there ; at least, he hoped she would.

Evening came ; and Mark mingled with the festive throng, distinguished above all his companions by the beauty of his form and face, in which mental and physical strength were conspicuous. His restless eye could nowhere discern the sole object for which it looked with any interest. She came at last, rather late, entering the rooms upon her father's arm. She appeared very differ-

ently from yesterday with its jewelled state, being very simply attired in a white muslin dress, with flowers for her sole ornaments, save a single bracelet of pearls, and a chain of the same pure gems about her neck. She, too, was looking for some one; and when she met Mark's kindling glance, she blushed and smiled. This was enough to make him radiant. They were introduced; and he danced with her; he even walked upon the portico with her, her hand resting upon his arm. Her words and manners were as lovely and intelligent as her looks. He was like one caught up in a cloud of glory, until she was gone. Then the festivity had no longer any meaning for him. It was midnight in his heart, as well as out of doors; but the midnight of the first was not sown so quickly with stars. "Only four days more!" he sighed, as he came upon deck the succeeding day. In his visit to the shore that day, he had but one purpose, which was to walk out past the suburbs of Funchal, in the hope of seeing Isabel Berthiers walking in her garden, or sitting upon the veranda of her house. Stealing away from his companions, he took his solitary promenade; but, slowly as he passed the castle, he caught not even the faintest glimpse of a white dress or female form. Twice and thrice he passed and repassed; until, at length, thoroughly discomfited, he hailed a man who was going by with a couple of mules, and hired one of them for a lonely ride among the mountains, where he might indulge his reveries and his disappointment undisturbed.

Following the winding and picturesque ascent, not even the desperate state of his mind could blind his beauty-loving eyes to the magnificence of the views, opening, like glimpses of heaven, all about him. The dark blue sea glittering far below, the green heights rising one above another, the glimpses of valleys and vineyards, were enchanting. Suddenly, his heart gave a great bound. In the road before him were a couple of horsewomen. Could he be mistaken in thinking one of them to be Isabel Berthiers, and the other her maid? Ah, he knew that light figure and those dark brown curls, even in the new disguise of riding-habit and hat! How gracefully she sat upon her fiery and yet obedient Arabian, whose lithe, elastic tread seemed fittingly to bear onwards her perfect form! The two were not far in advance of him, and were nearly pausing upon a hill-top, as if to enjoy the scene before them. He spurred up his mule to overtake them. Mules are proverbially obstinate; and this particular animal was not less fractious than his race. Moreover, Mark was unaccustomed to their management, this being his very first trial of their qualities. Obedient to the touch of the spur, the beast started on at a reckless rate; but, when Mark would have checked him with one hand, while with the other he raised his hat to the lady whom he now came opposite to, he only bounded forwards at a madder speed, clearing the brow of the hill with a jump which nearly tossed his rider from his seat. The road here was not much more than a steep and dangerous path; and the

mule tore down it distractedly, stumbling over rocks and down abrupt declivities in such style, that Mark could only cling to his mane with both hands. His keenest consciousness was of the ludicrous figure he must be presenting to the "sweetest eyes t'were ever seen;" and the next moment this consciousness had passed into insensibility. He lay across a sharp rock with a broken leg.

The shriek of terror which burst from the lips of Isabel Berthiers would have been music in his ears; but he did not hear it. When he came to himself, with a groan of pain, which he would have repressed had he been sensible of it in time, a pitying face was bending over him, a soft hand was bathing his brow with water. But it was only Florette, the waiting-maid, after all; for the nervous little French woman was unequal to an emergency, and had preferred remaining to keep watch over him; while her more courageous mistress rode off in search of help. Once, moved by compassion for his sufferings, Florette kissed his white cheeks, as he lay with closed eyes striving to repress any manifestation of pain. The face of the young engineer flushed with anger at the liberty. There was only one pair of lips in the world which could soothe his anguish; and, if those were denied him, none other must take their place.

"How is he, Florette? Oh, tell me that he is not dead!" cried a voice whose sweetness had never been so divine as now, when full of the tenderness of pity, if not of deeper emotion.

"Not dead, I hope, nor even dangerous," replied poor Mark, himself, forcing a smile, as Isabel slid from her saddle, and knelt by his side. Her hand for an instant rested upon his.

"I met some men," she said. "They will be here very soon. They were on foot, and could not come so soon as I."

"My leg, I believe, is broken," murmured Mark.

"Alas! how will you ever bear the rude jolting of being conveyed down the mountain? Poor child!"

Her simple expression of "poor child" betrayed the gentleness of her sympathy for him; and Mark was almost content. "At least, I am not entirely ridiculous in her view," he thought.



CHAPTER III.

"That blessed mule!" said Mark. "How can I ever be sufficiently grateful to him?"

Isabel blushed, and plucked a violet from her mother's grave, by the side of which they were sitting. The flush on the young man's cheek, the eager light in his eye, deepened, as he read the sweet meaning in that innocent face. "A broken limb is not too dear a price to pay for six months in this earthly Eden," he continued, "even if it leaves me with a limp for life; but that I do not anticipate. Five of the six months of

absence granted me by my ship have already fled. In four weeks, the 'America' will be in port again; the round of my duties will recommence—duties which you, the child of poetry and luxury, can hardly conceive as consistent with a nature which claims kindred with beauty and delicacy by right of an earnest love for them. You were never down amid the oil, and smoke, and fire, and suffocating atmosphere of an engine-room; were you? You never listened to the monotonous music of creaking machinery. You have only heard the voice of nightingales, the melody of your guitar, and breathed the aroma of flowers. You have never even been chilled by the rigors of winter, for there is no winter in this glorious climate. Is it not strange, then, that I, the embodiment of the real, the practical, of the energy which must win its own way, conquer its own fortune, make a new path in a new world, should have dared—as I have done—to worship the embodiment of the ideal, the poetic, the beautiful? that I should have dared—to—to—dear Isabel!"

The conclusion of his speech was not just what he intended; but it had an eloquence of its own, given by the impassioned tone and look. As he spake it, it meant everything—hope, fear, persuasion, intense solicitude, and regret, and, most of all, overmastering love. The fingers which were plucking the violet to pieces trembled. He caught them in his own, and kissed them. "Oh, forgive me!" he exclaimed. "What right have I, a poor engineer, to love you thus? I have no right—at

least, I know this is what your father and the world will think and say ; and I meant to have kept my secret in my own heart. I should not have trusted myself in your presence, had I not hoped not to betray myself. I have *no right* to be speaking to you thus ; and yet it is because a spiritual instinct teaches me that no one can appreciate what is most beautiful in your mind, and soul, and heart as well as your features, any more deeply and purely than I, that I do not feel abased by this confession—that I do not feel that I wrong your pride in making it. You will refuse my worship. I expect as much, because fate has thrown me in a different sphere ; but there is so much of honor and reverence in the love I give you, that it must glorify your womanhood, as proof of your own excellence. You are not offended with me for saying this much, when I tell you that I ask and expect nothing ?”

Isabel looked up into the manly countenance, now all luminous and earnest with the glow of the soul within, and her blue eyes flashed through their tears. “ I *am* honored by your love,” she said ; “ and I shall not reject it. Why should I throw away my happiness ? You know that I love you, dear Mark.”

Then the roseate hue deepened over all her beautiful face and neck at the boldness of her frank confession. She threw away the violets in confusion, and tried to conceal her love-lit face by hiding it in her hands. All the resolution of Mark’s nature was not sufficient to enable him to resist the temptation ; so he drew away the

hands, and concealed the lovely countenance upon his own shoulder. "But your father?" he asked, after a moment.

Isabel lifted her head; and the tears of joy in her eyes changed to tears of sorrow as they dropped upon her cheeks.

"He likes you; he respects you; but he will be angry at this."

"There he is, now, walking upon the veranda, alone. There will be no better time to speak with him. Since I have been so unwise, so selfish, I must confess my fault to him, that he may not say I have sought secretly to influence you."

"It will be the end of our happiness," sighed Isabel.

"But is it not my duty?"

"Yes, it is; and you must go," she answered, lifting her young face with a brave smile. "Go, dear Mark; and good bye."

She spoke this farewell as if she felt it to be the last.

He hastened through the garden paths, now all in a glow of splendor from the light of the setting sun. Mr. Berthiers saw him advance, and paused in his promenade. There was a shadow upon his face, in place of the pleasant smile with which he usually greeted the young engineer, whose society he had found very attractive, and whose original ideas about persons and things, as well as the many evidences he gave of a fine and high order of genius, had interested him much. Perhaps the thought had just struck him of the danger he was

encountering in giving so much encouragement to this young man to visit at his house. An instinct may have warned him of the truth, or he may have read it in the expressive countenance before him.

"Mr. Berthiers," began Mark, after a moment of embarrassing constraint, with a slight falter in his voice, although his glance was firm, "I love your daughter. I did not mean to betray this to her or you ; but, having unguardedly confessed it to Isabel, I cannot withhold it from you. I have asked no promise of her. It is to you that I come to ask permission to address her."

"Who are you that tell me this?" asked Mr. Berthiers, all the haughtiness of his English soul depicted in his face. There was a sneer in the question which sent the hot blood of the young man burning through his veins.

"I thought you knew who I was, Mr. Berthiers, when you admitted me to the hospitality of your house. You have the pledge of the stainlessness of my character in the word of the officers of my ship. I am Mark Summers, an American, at present second assistant Engineer on the United States steamer 'America.' I am more than that, Mr. Berthiers ; I am one who depends for his wealth and advancement upon the energies of his own brain, and even hands—who hopes to make himself honored, independent of the aid of ancestry and inherited wealth."

"So I supposed," replied his companion, resuming his courtesy of manner ; "and you must admit that

these circumstances do not render you a suitable husband for my child. I respect your worth and admire your talent. But Isabel is very dear to me ; and I cannot think that her welfare would be secured by a union with poverty and toil. You must confess yourself, Mr. Summers, that it would be selfish of you to ask it."

"I do not ask it," was the proud and hasty reply. "I do not expect always to be poor ; and I would rather die than see your beloved daughter suffer a privation of comfort or position. I was only about to request that you would not refuse me the chance of gaining her hand when I have made myself worthy of its bestowal. She loves me, Mr. Berthiers," he added, with sudden vehemence.

"I do not doubt the foolish child thinks so," was the cool and half angry reply. "But girls outgrow these first fancies. I will take the responsibility of her forgetting you when once you are away from Madeira."

"And blight all the beauty of her nature by wedding her to some fool who trails a pedigree behind him," burst forth Mark, turning upon his heel.

With rapid steps, he retraced his way to Isabel. "It is as we expected," he said, as he stopped before her an instant. "Your father insults me by his manner. If you were not his only child, I should be tempted—but I will not rob him of his treasure ; and I am too poor to secure to you the luxuries which ought to be yours. So farewell, Isabel. But let me ask of you

this one boon—not to forget me—not to give yourself to another, until I have had time to try my fate at the wheel of fortune. I may conquer these difficulties, and return in triumph to claim what has been refused me.”

Once again he kissed her cold hands, and was gone.

It was long after nightfall before Isabel returned to the house. As she stepped into the hall, she met her father, who was coming to look for her. “My dear child,” he whispered, taking her tenderly in his arms, and kissing her, “you look pale. You have stayed out in the evening air too long.”

“Oh, my father! can you indeed love me so much, and yet be so cruel?” thought the young girl, as she returned his embrace, and then hastened to her room.

It was scarcely a week after this that, sitting on her balcony, she saw the flag of the “America” again flying as she came into port. She had come even sooner than had been expected. For a couple of days the stars and stripes fluttered over the vessel as she lay at anchor; and then, one morning, when Isabel arose and looked out—she was gone—the “America” was not in sight. From that time, Isabel’s old love for sitting in her west window, and looking forth over the sea, was confirmed. Late at night she sat there, and through long hours of the day; until her father became seriously alarmed to find that no gaiety he could invent could win her from the charm of her solitary musings.

So months and months slipped away ; and the aspect of things was not changed, except that the beauty of Isabel grew more and more into repute, and the ardor of her lovers seemed increased by the reserve which invested her loveliness with a deeper fascination. Her father could detect no reason for uneasiness with regard to her health, for, though quiet, and devoted to her books and reveries, and indifferent to society, she seemed well and not absolutely melancholy. A vague hope and trust it was which kept the rose still fresh upon her cheek—a trust that her lover would meet with the success he merited, and return in time to praise her and reward her for her constancy.

One morning, more than a year after the departure of the “ America,” Mr. Berthiers and his daughter were walking in the garden together. It was the season when the roses were in their rarest and richest profusion. A high wall, which protected the garden from the spray of the sea, was literally draped as with a crimson curtain. The ripples, which whispered upon the other side, seemed begging a share of their sweets.

“ Isabel,” began her father, as they paced along arm-in-arm, “ this is a beautiful island ; the rest of the world is not like it. Neither pestilence nor sterility destroys it ; it is spared the variations of climate which make a residence in most other lands less desirable ; it has not the savage rudeness of the north, nor the poisonous fevers, reptiles, and pests of the south ; it is all fertility, beauty—an earthly Eden. You have been brought up

here ; and I know that you would not be happy elsewhere. I do not like to see you live quiet and self-secluded, even sad. I have never spoken to you of Mark Summers, because I believed you would soon forget him. He cannot make you happy, for he has not the means. Last night I received a proposal for your hand which pleased me, and I promised to make it known to you. Our neighbor, Don Martino—he is young and handsome ; his estate joins mine ; I should not be separated from you. He is chivalrous and accomplished, a man of pure habits—all that a young girl usually admires. It will be a sad day for me when you marry any one ; but since such is the proper and natural event some time to be anticipated, I have favored his proposals.”

“Dear papa, why not allow me always to live with you, and not talk of marriage ? I cannot accept Don Martino,” cried Isabel, bursting into tears.

“I know why you say this. It is that insolent American.”

“Mark Summers was not insolent, father. He was as chivalrous, as honorable as this Portuguese Don ; as young, as good, and a thousand times more agreeable to me. He had some soul, some heart, some originality ; he had qualities to awaken enthusiasm and devotion. You knew it, father ; but you would not tolerate him, because he was self-made, and dependent upon his own resources. I admired the very thing you condemned. I believe the free air of this beloved

island, the grandeur of this restless ocean, the books, the poetry you have given me to read, the thousand happy influences which here surround me, have made me a staunch republican, papa. I love the earth for its beauty, and men for what they are, not for the circumstances which they have had no hand in creating. Is it the work of true nobility, my father, to trample upon a glorious manhood, because it does not come recommended by outward pomp?"

She paused and dropped his arm, looking with her clear eyes into his face until he blushed beneath their earnest questioning.

"What do you know of the world, little girl?" he answered.

They were standing now by her mother's grave, the very spot where Mark had confessed his passion, the spot which through life had ever been sacred and sweet to her.

"You loved my mother, did you not? And she loved you? Even so do I and Mark love each other."

It was seldom she had ventured to breathe her mother's name to him. Now he looked down, pale and troubled, upon the blossom-covered mound at his feet.

"God knows I loved her, and that I have never ceased to mourn her—that I have been faithful to her memory!"

"Yet you would preach that love is a mockery, and that position is the only tangible good. Well, my

father, when you think of the happy days you passed with my mother, remember that you have deprived two young hearts of all that coveted happiness."

He looked into her face with a new expression; there was something in its calm dignity, its eloquent intensity, which awakened new reflections.

"I never thought of it in that light before," he said at length, after a long silence. "You may be right, Isabel, and I may be wrong. You shall have your own way, child. I am sure it will be one which will not grieve the angel watch which, I believe, your mother keeps over you."

"She blesses you for this, I know," cried Isabel, in a transport of joy. "My own noble father!"

Her arms were about his neck, and as they sat by the grave together, both in tears, a little bird in the orange tree over head poured forth a flood of triumphant music, as if he knew and sympathized in the sudden bliss of a girlish heart.

Strange coincidences sometimes occur. On that most golden, most glorious of all the days that had ever visited the earth to Isabel Berthiers, and wrapped her spirit in mysterious splendor, as she went to her room after her interview with her father, to dream over her new hope in the sweetness of solitude, something upon the ocean arrested her brilliant glance. She flew to the balcony; and, raising the glass which lay there, she very plainly read, upon the familiar pennant which streamed from a steamer just casting anchor, the

word "America." It is a wonder her heart did not break, it fluttered so. But it did not; it beat on and on, in its blissful tumult, until the evening hour, when she welcomed Mark Summers upon the veranda where she had first met him.

A wedding in Madeira, when beauty was vowed to manly worth, upon a starry evening, with lights sparkling like great fire-flies amid bowers of luxurious bloom, with sounds of mirth and festivity through all the pleasant rooms of the castle, and the solemn mountains looking down approvingly upon the scene, and the ocean murmuring its undertone of joy, must have had romance enough in it to satisfy two wild young hearts.

The good fellows of the "America" drank sparkling goblets of pure wine, as they sailed away, leaving their companion to his happy fate as the husband of the beautiful Isabel, the belle of Madeira.

"To the memory of Mark Summers," was the somewhat equivocal toast which they gave, as the scarf of his bride waved them a farewell from the window of the tower.

MADAME RÉCAMIER.

By fortune's favor early raised
To a most dangerous place,
And bountifully dowered, besides,
With loveliness and grace :
How didst thou triumph over all
Who rose like thee, though but to fall ?

For thou wert tempted like as they—
Ay, tempted even more—
So courted, flattered, and beloved,
Was woman ne'er before.
Yet strength was given thee from on high
To keep thy youth's first purity.

All men with true and noble souls
Thy firmest friends became—
While worthless suitors had thy scorn,
And fled in guilty shame.
Even royalty shrunk back subdued
By thy most noble womanhood.



MISS A. B. B. B. B.

By all life's dangers and its trials,
So worthy wert thou proved,
That they who only saw, admired,
And they who knew thee, loved.
And for such purity and worth,
What was thy recompense on earth?

Alas! while shameless infamy
Sat in her pride of place,
Thy goodness only brought to thee
Downfall and sad disgrace.
Alas! that justice should bestow,
So blindly, her rewards below.

Yet who can envy those who rise
By wrong to eminence?
Or who can pity thee, sustained
By conscious innocence?
Who would not rather suffer long
For right, than but one hour for wrong?

Who would not rather have thy thoughts
In exile and alone,
Than his who kept, by tyranny,
An unsubstantial throne?
He scarce might number each offence—
Thine only one was innocence.

And whatsoe'er our fates may be,
Whether we rise or fall,
Still One who sees, not as man sees,
Is in, and over all ;
Bringing, by ways not understood,
From earthly evil, heavenly good !

PAUL PYNE.

ACTOR AND GENTLEMAN.

BY T. B. ALDRICH.

I.

THIS is true, every word of it.

One December afternoon—so long ago that I positively refuse to give dates—I was sitting in my room, at a miscellaneous boarding-house, reading the proof-sheets of—no matter what. I was on the point of disentangling three anything but original lucid paragraphs which the compositor had kindly consolidated into one, and had arrived at that pitch of obliviousness to external things which only Bohemians know, when I suddenly became sensible that a most extraordinary style of conversation was going on in the next room. It seemed **as** if four or five persons were speaking in regular succession, the sentences following rapidly in each other's wake, and exploding in the air like innumerable rockets. Nothing short of this pyrotechnic simile

could describe the quick, angular sounds which shot through the thin partition into my room.

“If thou be'st devil I cannot kill thee!” cried a deep bass voice.

“The devil!” said I, upsetting my inkstand.

An ill-defined idea of murder floated on the surface of my mind, like a cork; and, in a second, I was at my neighbor's door. It was locked. Ceremony might have suggested a tap on the panels, but impulse kicked open the door.

Near the bed stood a slim, swarthy man, dressed in a pair of snuff-colored tights, with a sort of impromptu turban on his head, and a spangled mantle—

“You all do know this mantle ’---

of seedy brown velvet, thrown tragically over his shoulders. In his right hand he held the hilt of a sword—the blade was buried in a languid-looking bolster. I glanced instinctively at the floor, expecting to see several men, women, and children in the last agonies of death; but nothing was slaughtered, save the overgrown pillow: and no one was in the room save the strange man and myself.

As he drew out the short, flat sword, which I discovered to be an ingenious arrangement of wood and tin-foil, his eyes glowed insanely, and one large vein in his forehead threatened to break out of its accustomed channel, like the Nile, and overflow his face.

Without noticing my noisy entrance, he addressed himself to the stabbed bolster :

"I am not sorry neither ; I'd have thee live,
For, in my sense, 'tis happiness to die."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said I, touching his shoulder, "you are"—

"An actor." He finished the sentence for me. "And I fear," he continued, "that my thoughtless rehearsal has disturbed you. I came here yesterday, as there was a sick lady on the same floor with me at my last lodgings, and my readings annoyed her. I thought I should trouble no one here ; but I might have known—I might have known."

His expression was almost feminine in its gentleness ; and, as he spoke, I saw "a misery perched i' the melancholy corners of his mouth." I made haste to assure him that his declamation was not unpleasant to me, and to put in a modest excuse for my intrusion. As I turned to the door—having waited in vain for a recognition of the apology—he folded his arms, and said, in the most natural manner in the world :

"Soft you, a word or two before you go!"

Of course, I paused. He continued :

"I have done the state some service, and they know it."

"In the police department?" I suggested, quietly.

The absurdity of my comment extinguished his dramatic fire. He turned, and held out both hands to me with a frankness I could not resist. There was that certain quiet gentility about him, which, to me, is always irresistible—that refinement of face and manner which poverty never hides, and which all the world could not purchase for a clown. It is born with the man, like the color of his eyes, like the shape of his finger-nails.

This was PAUL PYNE, and, as I came to know him afterwards, an Actor and a Gentleman. Write that down.



II.

The people of Bohemia make rapid friendships, and are constantly giving the lie to that line of the sweet song which says,

“The poor make no new friends.”

In a week I had known Paul Pyne a year. Propinquity is everything, and Pyne and I were on the same floor, which does not, by any means, signify that we were on the same footing in the world; for Mr. Pyne “did” second-rate characters at a fourth-rate theatre, and I was the junior editor of the “Daily Slasher.” We met every day, on the stairs, and in the entry; and

occasionally Mr. Pyne would draw a chair in front of my little ill-natured air-tight stove, which was always muttering to itself, and chat with me. Before a month had elapsed I found myself lying awake until he came home from the theatre, which was always a long while after midnight; then he generally spent a chatty ten minutes at my bedside before retiring. Many a time, after my light was put out, I used to fancy that I saw his thoughtful, care-worn face outlined on the dark, and that sad, sweet smile of his which seemed to say, "Never mind me, but God bless you!"

As I have said, Paul Pyne played inferior parts at an obscure theatre; and yet he had in him the making of a great actor. Indeed, he had been quite famous once; but that was in years past, before he knew what it was to be tired of life.

For Paul Pyne was a melancholy man. I learnt that in three days. He had thrown away ambition long and long ago: he bided his time in the busy world, among men but not of them; and you saw it written in his eyes—*Tired of life!*

At first his want of ambition was a mystery to me; but day by day, as his past history leaked out in episodes, I saw how poor a man was Hamlet. As the worldly reader has already surmised, there was a woman at the bottom of it.

There is a woman at the bottom of everything.

One night, some ten years since, the *habitués* of the old Park—the critical and the non-critical, the members

of the orchestra, the call-boys, the scene-shifters, and all the supernumeraries of the theatre—were thrown into a state of melo-dramatic excitement by the *début* of the *petite* and angelic Miss Flighty. She was distracting. It seemed as if nature, in shaping her, had taken the coquettishness out of twenty coquetish women, and placed the whole in Miss Flighty's snowy little bosom. In short—to use an Arabian expression—she was a temptation to the sons of men, and particularly to the only son of Paul's father.

In due course of time, bouquets, bracelets, pink notes, and (among other things) Paul Pyne, fell at Miss Flighty's very pretty feet. Whether it was in consequence of his handsome eyes, or his cavalier-like bearing (for Paul *was* a gentleman), I cannot say ; but Miss Flighty gave him her hand to kiss—and he kissed it quite naturally. He lived in the atmosphere of Miss Flighty's lips, to which the Orient is nothing, and life was *couleur de rose*.

The days went by, as they will in such cases ; and Paul was doing as well as could be expected—with such a naughty little woman for a wife.

But there came a time when his bouquets were no longer accepted, when her cool “ Good morning, sir,” took the warm place of “ Paul, my pet, how are you ?” and an icy formality grew up around her like the Great Wall of China, shutting Paul out in the cold.

Life has its “ situations ” like any other comedy. The *dénoûment* of Paul's little play came suddenly.

One night the call-boy popped his head into the green-room—that mysterious place where (as in the grave) kings lose their dignity, and clowns forget their wit—and shrieked for “Juliet,” in vain. Then he hammered industriously at the young lady’s dressing-room door. But the fair capulet was not to be found; nor was he of the house of Montague anywhere visible. The fact is, the Romeo and Juliet of the evening were on their way to a neighboring city.

It is difficult to play “Romeo and Juliet” without Juliet and Romeo. The audience was uproarious, of course. Two farces supplanted the tragedy; and Paul Pyne, that night, walked through a light-hearted comedy with tragic awfulness.

But he was Paul Pyne no more.

I would that I could have known him in his sunny days. To me he was always a poor player, trailing his life among the smoky gas-lights and faded scenery of an out-of-the-way theatre. Nothing more. Stop! he was something more. He was courteous and kind, chivalrous and true, wearing his heart upon his sleeve, like any gentleman in Christendom!

III.

As Paul Pyne came into my room abruptly, one morning, I thrust a paper, which I had been reading,

into my bosom. It was skillfully done : but nothing escaped Paul.

“ Why do you hide your paper ?” he said. “ Does the critic snarl at your book ? He is wrong. Does he praise it ? You are modest. Or—or is it about *her* ?”

“ About her, Paul ; but do not read it.”

“ Give me the paper ?”

As the Gazette slipped from his stiffened fingers, I think I never saw any one so pale as Paul was.

For his sake and her sake, I will not tell the life that Therese Pyne lived nor the death she died. Nor will I say how far Paul Pyne was wrong.

“ Gently scan your brother man.
Still gentler sister woman.”

“ Paul,” said I, “ you are sick.”

“ The whole world is sick—a piece of it dies every day.”

That was a week after the newspaper affair, and he was sitting on his bed.

“ When I leave this room,” said Pyne, “ two men will help me—one at my head and the other at my heels !”

When I forget the smile that accompanied these words, I shall have forgotten the saddest sight of my life.

The doctor said not, but Paul's days were numbered. I watched every night at his bedside. It was pitiful to hear him, in his feverish sleep, repeat the fag-ends of

terrible soliloques—now a passage from Macbeth, now a curse from Lear, or a ghastly mixing up of lines from Othello and the Comedy of Errors. “Poor Tom’s a-cold,” he would say ; and then abruptly :

“Come and kiss me, sweet-and-twenty,
Youth’s a stuff will not endure!”

Then, stretching out his hands, “Alas, poor ghost!”

It must have been near twelve o’clock one night that I saw, or thought I saw him, leave the bed, and open a small trunk in which he kept his scant wardrobe. He seemed to be dressing himself—but for what character I could not determine. As he turned over the various articles of theatrical finery, he had a line for each, as if some old memory spoke, and not Paul Pyne! Having finished his “make up,” which resembled nothing I ever saw on or off the stage, he seemed to melt away, like the misty people who come to us in dreams.

The fine October sunshine on my eyelids awakened me.

Paul was lying across the bed most grotesquely apparelled. On his head was a Grecian helmet, on his feet a pair of modern riding-boots ; his face was half hidden by a long white beard such as Shylock wears ; a blue doublet, and a maroon-colored cloak, completed the strange costume. On this motley, insane dress fell the morning sunlight, leaping from spangle to spangle. I grasped Paul’s hand.

It was very cold !

PAULINE BONAPARTE.

LET her name be Queen of Beauty
For her wondrous loveliness ;
She is worthy of no higher
And no better place than this.

Not as daughter or as sister,
Was she aught we can desire ;
Not as friend, or wife, or mother,
Can we honor or admire.

And we scarce dare even whisper,
As we pause and read her name
“ She had something to redeem her,
We can pity while we blame.”

For no wisdom came with knowledge
To retrieve a wasted past ;
Hers was Folly's life of folly,
And its crowning act the last.

Think of an immortal creature
With a soul for endless years,
Knowing only selfish pleasures,
Weeping only selfish tears



Think of any woman, troubled
By no higher thought than this—
Whether emeralds, pearls, or diamonds
Best would grace her loveliness ;—

Taxing all the little powers
Of a vain and foolish brain
With the fashion of a turban,
Or the border of a train !

Yet our Queen of Beauty's vision
Of the fullness of delight
Was a "fête for every morning,
And a ball for every night ;"

And to live for pleasure only,
In a ceaseless round of mirth ;
This, her estimate of duty,
And her value of life's worth.

So we call her Queen of Beauty,
Yielding to her only claim ;
For no deed that honors woman
Ever beautified her name.

All her days were vain and idle,
As a vapor or a breath ;
She was fair, but frail and sinful,
In her life and in her death.

CAROLINE BONAPARTE.

FROM the humblest little blossom
To the flowers of tropic climes,
All things God has made are lovely,
In their seasons and their times.

From the farthest star that twinkles,
To the sun with dazzling light,
Every planet is most glorious
In his own appointed height.

And the oak tree is no better,
Towering in majestic pride,
Than the clinging vine, whose verdure
Covers all his rugged side.

And the nightingale's soft music
Falls no sweeter through the dark,
Than the clear and ringing matin
Of the heaven-ascending lark.

Nature always owns God's wisdom ;
Flower, and bird, and star, and sun,
Keep wherever he has placed them,
Growing, singing, shining on.

When the birds of morn are chanting,
Then the nightingale doth rest ;
Never any lark soars, singing,
When she should be in her nest.

And each little star rejoices
In his empire of a night,
As the sun doth, in the splendour
Of his own unrivalled light.

Only man, of all creation,
His true limit doth o'erleap :
Only man falls down, by climbing
Up to heights he cannot keep.

Yet thy rise and fall, fair lady,
Makes at least this lesson plain :
Haughty pride and usurpation
Cannot keep what they can gain.

Thou hadst never suffered downfall,
And disgrace and banishment ;
If, in thine own humble station,
Thou hadst learned to be content.

Hadst thou kept thy feet from places,
Where but lawful queens had trod,
Claiming this one title only,
“ Woman, by the grace of God.”

LOST ALICE.

CHAPTER I.

WHY did I marry her? I often asked myself the question, in the days that succeeded our honeymoon. By right, I should have married no one. Yet I loved her, as I love her still.

She was, perhaps, the strangest character of her age. In her girlhood, I could not comprehend her; and I often think, when I raise my eyes to her grave, quiet face, as she sits opposite me at dinner, that I do not comprehend her yet. There are many thoughts working in her brain of which I know nothing, and flashes of feeling look out at her eyes now and then, and go back again, as captives might steal a glimpse at the outer world through their prison bars, and turn to their brick-walled solitude once more. She is my wife. I have her, and hold her as no other can. She bears my name, and sits at the head of my table; she rides beside me in my carriage, or takes my arm as we walk: and yet I know and feel, all the time, that the darling of my past has fled from me forever, and

that it is only the ghost of the gay Alice, whom I won in all the bloom of her bright youth, that lingers near me now.

She was not a child when I married her, though she was very young. I mean, that life had taught her lessons which are generally given only to the grey-haired, and had laid burdens upon her which belong of right to the old. She had been an unloved child, and at the age of sixteen she was left to herself, and entirely dependent on her own exertions. Friends and family she had none, so she was accustomed laughingly to say ; but I have since found that her sisters were living, and in happy homes, even at the time when she accepted that awful trust of herself and went out of the great world to fulfill it. Of this part of her life she never speaks ; but one who knew her then has told me much. It was a time of struggle and pain, as well it might have been. Fresh from the life of a large boarding-school, she was little fitted for the bustle of a great selfish city ; and the tears come to my eyes as I think, with a kind of wonder, on the child who pushed her way through difficulties at which strong men have quailed, and made herself a name, and a position, and a home. She was a writer—at first a drudge, for the weekly press, poorly paid, and unappreciated. By and by, brighter days dawned, and the wolf went away from the door. She was admired, read, sought after, and—above all—paid. Even then, she could not use the wisdom she had purchased at so dear a rate. She

held her heart in her hand, and it was wrung and tortured every day

“I may as well stop breathing as stop loving,” she would say, with a happy smile. “Don’t talk to me about my folly. Let me go on with my toys ; and, if they break in my hand you cannot help it, and I shall not come to you for sympathy.”

She was not beautiful ; but something—whether it was her bright, happy face, or the restless gaiety of her manner—bewitched people, and made them like her. Men did the maddest things imaginable for her sake ; and not only young men in whom folly was pardonable, but those who should have been too wise to be caught by the sparkle of her smile, or the gay ringing of her laugh. She did not trust them ; her early life had taught her better ; but I think she liked them for a while, till some newer fancy came, and then she danced past them, and was gone.

It was in the country that I met her first ; and there she was more herself than in the city. We were distant relatives, though we had never seen each other, and the Fates sent me to spend my summer vacation with my mother’s aunt, in a country village, where she was already domesticated. Had I known this, I should have kept my distance ; for it was only a fourteenth or fifteenth cousinship that lay between us, and I had a kind of horror of her. I hardly knew why. I was a steady-going, quiet sort of lawyer, and hated to have my short holiday of rest and quiet broken in upon by a

fine lady. I said as much to my aunt in return for her announcement of "Alice Kent is here," with which she greeted me. She looked over her spectacles in quiet wonder as I gave her a slight sketch of the lady's city life, as I had had it from the lips of "Mrs. Grundy" herself.

"Well—live and learn, they say. But whoever would think it was our Alice you are talking of, Frank! However, I'll say no more about her. You'll have plenty of time to get acquainted with her in the month you mean to pass here. And we are glad to see you, and your bedroom is ready, the one you used to like."

I took up my hat, and strolled away to have a look at the farm. I walked slowly through the woods, with the sunshine falling through the green leaves of the young beeches in checkered radiance on my path. Something stirred as I pierced my way through the branches, and I heard a low growl.

A girl was half-sitting, half-lying, in the sunshine beside the little lake, throwing pebbles into the water, and watching the ripples that spread and widened to the other shore. A great black Newfoundland dog was standing between me and her, showing a formidable row of strong white teeth, and looking me threateningly in the face.

She started, and looked sharply round, and saw me standing in the little grove with the dog between us. She burst out laughing.

I felt that I was cutting a rather ridiculous figure,

but I put a bold face upon the matter, and asked, coolly—

“Are you Alice Kent?”

“People call me so.”

“Then I suppose I may call you cousin, for I am Frank Atherton?”

“Cousin Frank! We have been expecting you this week. When did you come?”

“Just now.”

She made room for me beside her. We talked long, about our family, our mutual friends, and the old homestead of the Athertons. She was dressed plainly, very plainly, in a kind of grey material, that fell around her in light, soft folds. Her brown hair was soft and pretty, but she wore it carelessly pushed away from her forehead: not arranged with that nicety I should have expected of a city belle. Her features were irregular, full of life and spirit, but decidedly plain; her complexion fair, her mouth rather large, frank, and smiling; her eyebrows arched, as if they were asking questions; and her eyes large, and of a soft dark grey, very pleasant to look into, very puzzling, too, as I found afterwards to my cost. Those eyes were the only beauty she possessed, and she unconsciously made the most of them.

Though I had known her only five minutes, I felt this, when I chanced to look up and meet a curious glance she had fixed on me. She had ceased to talk, and was sitting, with her lips half apart and a lovely color mantling on her cheek, studying my face intently.

when our eyes met. There was an electric kind of shock in the gaze. I saw the color deepen and go up to her forehead, and a shiver ran over me from head to foot. It was dangerous for me to watch that blush, but I did ; and I longed to know its cause, and wondered what thought had brought it.

"Fred, bring me my hat," she said to her dog, affecting to yawn. "It is time for us to go home to supper, I suppose. Are you hungry, Cousin Frank?"

"Yes—no," I answered, with my thoughts still running on that blush.

She laughed good-naturedly, and took the hat from the Newfoundland, who had brought it in his mouth.

"How fond you are of that great dog!" I said, as we rose from our seat beneath the tree.

"Fond of him?" She stooped down over him with a sudden impetuous movement, took his head between her two hands, and kissed the beauty-spot on his forehead. "Fond of him, Cousin Frank? Why, the dog is my idol! He is the only thing on earth who is or has been true to me, and the only thing"—— She stopped short, and colored.

"That you have been true to," I said, finishing the sentence for her.

"So people say," she answered, with a laugh, "But look at him—look at those beautiful eyes, and tell me if any one could help loving him. My poor old Fred! So honest in this weary world!"

She sighed, and patted his head again, and he stood

wagging his tail and looking up into her face, with eyes that were, as she had said, beautiful, and what was better far, brimful of love and honesty.

"I doubt if you will keep pace with us," she said, after we had walked a few steps; "and Fred is longing for a race; I always give him one through the woods. Would you mind?"

"Oh dear, no!"

The next moment she was off like the wind, and the dog tearing after her, barking till the woods rang again. I saw her that night no more.

CHAPTER II.

I WAS, as I have already said, a grave, steady-going lawyer, verging towards a respectable middle age, with one or two grey hairs showing among my black locks. I had had my dreams and fancies, and my hot, eager, generous youth, like most other men; and they had passed away. But one thing I had not known, one thing I had missed (save in my dreams), and that was a woman's love.

So, as a matter of course, I fell into danger now. When Alice Kent went singing and dancing through the house, leaving every door and window open as she went, I used often to lay down my pen and look after her, and feel as if the sun shone brighter for her being there.

We grew to be great friends—like brother and sister, I used to say to myself. How that liking guided gradually into loving, I could not have told. I met her one day in the village street. I turned a corner, and came upon her suddenly. She was walking slowly along, with her dog beside her, and her eyes fixed upon the ground, looking graver and more thoughtful than I had ever seen her before. At sight of me her whole face brightened suddenly ; yet she passed me with a slight nod and a smile, and took her way towards home. Seeing that flash of light play over her grave face, and feeling the sudden bound with which my heart sprang up to meet it, I knew what we were to each other.

It was late when I reached home, after a musing walk. The farmer and his wife had gone to bed, the children were at a merry-making at the next house, and a solitary light burned from the parlor window, which was open. The full moon shone fairly in a sky without a cloud. I unfastened the gate, and went in ; and there in the open door sat Alice, with a light shawl thrown over her shoulders, her head resting on the shaggy coat of the Newfoundland dog. His beautiful brown eyes watched me as I came up the path, but he did not stir.

I sat down near her ; but on the lower step, so that I could look up in her face.

“ Alice, you do not look well.”

“ But I am. Quite well. I am going away to-morrow.”

“ Going away ! Where ?”

“ Home. To London. Well ? What ails you,

Cousin Frank? Did you never hear of any one who went to London before?"

"Yes; but why do you go?"

"Why?" She opened her eyes and looked at me. "For many reasons. Firstly, I only came for six weeks, and I have stayed nearly three months; secondly, because I have business which can be put off no longer; and, thirdly, because my friends are wondering what on earth keeps me here so long (they will say soon it is you, Frank). They vow they cannot do without me any longer; and it is pleasant to be missed, you know."

"And so you are going back to the old life, Alice? And, by and by, I suppose you will marry?"

I would not advise any man, be he old or young, in case he does not think it wise or prudent to marry the woman he loves, to linger with her in the door-way of a silent farmhouse, and hold her hand, and look out upon a moonlight night. The touch of the small slight fingers was playing the mischief with my good resolutions, and my wisdom (if I had any).

"Alice," I said, softly; and I almost started, as she did, at the sound of my own voice, it was so changed.

"Alice, we have been very happy here."

"Very."

I took both her hands, and held them close in mine. But she would not look at me, though her face was turned that way.

"There is a great difference between us, dear Alice. I am much older than you, and much graver. I have

never loved any woman but you in my life, while you have charmed a thousand hearts, and had a thousand fancies. If you were what the world thinks you, and what you try to make yourself out to be, I should say no more than this—I love you. But I know that you have a heart. I know that you can love, if you will; and can be true if you will. And so I beseech you to talk to me honestly, and tell me if you can love me, or if you do. I am not used to asking such questions of ladies, Alice, and I may seem rough and rude; but believe me when I say you have won my whole heart, and I cannot be happy without you.”

“Yes, I believe you,” she said.

“But do you trust me, and do you love me?”

She might trifle with a trifler, but she was earnest enough with me.

“I trust you and I love you,” she answered frankly. “Are you wondering why I can stand before you and speak so calmly? Because I do not think I shall ever marry you. You do not love me as I have always said my husband should love me. I am wayward and exacting, and I should weary your life out by my constant craving for tenderness. I was made to be petted, Frank; and you, though a loving, are not an affectionate man. You would wish me at the bottom of the Red Sea before we had been married a month; and because you could not get me there, you would go to work and break my heart, by way of amusement. I know it as well as if I had seen it all—even now.”

She looked at me, and all her woman's heart and nature were in her eyes. They spoke love and passion and deep, deep tenderness—and all for me. Something leaped into life in my heart at that moment which I had never felt before—something that made my affection of the last few hours seem cold and dead beside its fervent glow. I had her in my arms within the instant—close—close to my heart.

“Alice! if ever man loved woman with heart and soul—madly and unreasonably, if you will, but still truly and honestly—I love you, my darling.”

“But will it last? Oh, Frank, will it last?”

I bent down, and our lips met in a long fond kiss.

“You will be my wife, Alice?”

She leaned her pretty head against my arm, and her hand stole into mine again.

“Do you mean that for your answer? Am I to keep the hand, dear Alice, and call it mine?”

“If you will, Francis.”

It was the first time she had ever given me that name. But she never called me by any other again until she ceased to love me; and it sounds sweetly in my memory now, and it will sound sweetly to my dying day.

CHAPTER III.

We were married not long after, and for six months we dwelt in a "Fool's Paradise." When I think that but for me it might have lasted to our dying day, I can only sigh, and take up the burden of my life with an aching heart.

They had called Alice fickle—oh, how wrongly! No human being could be truer to another than she was to me.

"I only wanted to find my master, Francis," she used to say, when I laughed at her about it. "I was looking for him through all those long years, and I began to think he would never come. But from the first moment when I heard you speak, and met your eyes, I felt that he was near me. And I am glad to wear my master's chains," she added, kissing my hand.

And I am sure she was in earnest. I pleased her best when I treated her most like a child. She was no angel—a passionate, high spirited creature. She rebelled a thousand times a day, although she delighted in my control. But it was pretty to see her, when she turned to leave the room, with fire in her eyes, and a deep flush on her cheek—it was pretty to see her with her hand upon the lock even, drop her proud head submissively, and wait when I said—"Stop. Shut the door, and listen to me,"

Yet it was dangerous. I, who had never been loved before, what could I do but become a tyrant, when a creature so noble as this bent down before me ?

She loved me. Every chord of her most sensitive heart thrilled and trembled to my touch, and gave forth sweetest music ; yet I was not satisfied. I tried the minor key. Through her deep affection for me I wounded her cruelly. I can see it now. Some wise idea found its way into my head and whispered that I was making a child of my wife by my indulgent ways, and that her character would never develop itself in so much sunshine. I acted upon that thought, forgetting how she had already been tried in the fiery furnace of affliction ; and quite unconscious that while she was getting back all the innocent gaiety of her childish years, the deep lessons of her womanhood were still lying beneath the sparkling surface of her playful ways.

If for a time she had charmed me out of my graver self, I resolved to be charmed no more. I devoted myself again to my business, heart and soul, and sat poring for hours over law-papers without speaking to her. Yet she did not complain. So long as she was certain that I loved her, she was content, and took up her pen again, and went on with the work our marriage had interrupted. Her writing-desk was in my study, by a window just opposite mine ; and sometimes I would cease to hear the rapid movement of her pen, and, looking up, I would find her eyes fixed upon my face, while a happy smile was playing around her lips. One day

that glance found me in a most unreasonable mood. The sense of her love half pained me, and I said, curtly,

"It is bad taste, Alice, to look at any one in that way."

She dropped her pen, only too glad of an excuse to talk to me, and came and leaned over my chair.

"And why? when I love some one."

This was a bad beginning of the lesson. I wanted to teach her, and I turned over my papers in silence.

"Do I annoy you, Francis?"

"Not much."

Her light hand was playing with my hair, and her breath was warm on my cheek. I felt my wisdom vanishing, and tried to make up for its loss by an increased coldness of manner.

"One kiss," she said. "Just one, and I'll go away."

"What nonsense, Alice! What time have I to think of kisses now?"

She stood up, and looked me in the face.

"Do I tease you, Francis?"

"Very much."

She gave a little sigh—so faint that I could scarcely hear it—and left the room. I had scared her gaiety away for that morning.

This was the first cloud in our sky.

It seems strange now, when I look back upon it after the lapse of years, how perseveringly I labored to destroy the foundation of peace and happiness on which I might have built my life.

In the midst of our estrangement the dog sickened. There was a week of misgiving on Alice's part, when she sat beside him with her books, or writing all the time—there was a day when both books and manuscript were put away, and she was bending over him, with her tears falling fast, as she tried to hush his moans, and looked into his fast glazing eyes—and there was an hour of stillness, when she lay on the low couch, with her arm around his neck, neither speaking nor stirring. And when the poor creature's last breath was drawn, she bent over him with a passionate burst of grief, kissed the white spot upon his forehead, and closed the soft, dark eyes, that even in death were turned towards her with a loving look.

She did not come to me for sympathy. She watched alone, while the gardener dug a grave and buried him beneath the study window. She never mentioned him to me, and never paid her daily visit to his grave till I was busy with my papers for the evening. So the year, which had begun in love and happiness, came to its close.

It was a warm, bright, beautiful day, and she seemed to bring a burst of sunlight and happiness with her as she opened the door. Her own face, too, was radiant, and she looked like the Alice of the old farm house as she came on tip-toe and bent over my chair.

“ Well, what is it ? ” I asked, looking up.

She laid a pretty little bouquet of violets, tied with blue ribbons, before me.

"I have been to the conservatory, and have brought you the first flowers of the season, Francis. And something else, which, perhaps, you may not like so well."

She bent over me as she spoke, and leaning her hand lightly on my shoulder, kissed me twice. She had been chary of her caresses, for some time ; and, when she did this of her own accord, I wheeled round in my chair, and looked up at her.

"You seem very happy to-day, Alice?"

"It is somebody's birthday," she said, stationing herself upon my knee, and looking into my eyes. "And I wish somebody very many happy returns:"—her voice faltered a little—"and if there has been any wrong feeling, Francis, for the last six months, we will bury it to-day, now and forever."

She clung to me in silence, and hid her face upon my breast. I was moved, in spite of myself, and kissed the brown hair that was scattered over my shoulder, and said I was quite willing to forget everything (as if I had anything to forget)! At which she looked up with a bright smile, and I dare say thought me very magnanimous.

"And we will make a new beginning from this day, Francis."

"If you will, my child."

She caressed me again, after a queer little fashion of her own, which always made me smile, and which consisted of a series of kisses bestowed systematically on different parts of my face—four, I believe, being allotted

to my forehead, two to each cheek, two to the chin, four to my lips, and four to my eyes. She went through this ceremony with a painstaking care, and then looked me in the face. All her love and tenderness seemed to come up before me in that moment and efface the past and its unhappiness. I held her closely to my heart, and her arms were around my neck.

Will any one believe it? My wife had scarcely left me five moments before the fancy came to me that I had shown too plainly the power she had over me. For months I had been schooling myself into coldness and indifference, and at her very first warm kiss or smile I was completely routed. She had vexed, and thwarted, and annoyed me much during those months: it would not do to pardon her so fully and entirely before she had even asked my forgiveness. I took a sudden resolution; and, when she came back into the room, was buried in my papers once more. Poor child! She had had one half hour's sunshine at least.

"One moment," she said, taking the pen out of my hand, and holding something up over my head. "I have a birthday gift for you. Do you want it?"

"If you give it to me, certainly."

"Then ask me for it."

I said nothing, but took up my pen again. Her countenance fell a little.

"Would you like it?" she said, timidly.

"There was a saint in old times," I said, quietly, going on with my papers, "a namesake of mine, by-the-

way—St Francis of Sales—who was accustomed to say that one should never ask or refuse anything.”

“ Well! But I’m not talking to *Saint* Francis; I am talking to you. Will you have my little gift? Say yes—just to please me—just to make my happy day still happier.”

“ Don’t be a child, Alice.”

“ It is childish, I know; but indulge me this once. It is such a little thing, and it will make me very happy.”

“ I shall not refuse whatever you choose to give me. Only don’t delay me long, for I want to go on with these papers.”

The next moment she threw the toy (a pretty little bronze inkstand, made like a Cupid, with his quiver full of pens) at my feet, and turned away, grieved and angry. I stooped to pick up the figure: it was broken in two.

“ Oh, you can condescend to lift it from the ground!” she said, sarcastically.

“ Upon my word, Alice, you are the most unreasonable of beings. However, the little god of love can be easily mended.”

“ Yes.”

She placed the fragments one upon the other, and looked at me.

“ It can be mended, but the accident must leave its trace, like all others. Oh! Francis,” she added, throwing herself down by my chair, and lifting my hand to her

lips, "why do you try me so? Do you really love me?"

"Alice," I said, impatiently, "get up. You tire me."

She rose and turned very pale.

"I will go, then. But first answer my question. Do you love me, Francis?"

I felt anger and obstinacy in my heart—nothing else. Was she threatening me?

"Did you love me when you married me, Francis?"

"I did. But"—

"But you do not love me now?"

"Since you will have it," I said.

"Go on!"

"I do not love you—not as you mean."

There was a dead silence in the room as the lying words left my lips, and she grew so white, and gave me such a look of anguish, that I repented of my cruelty and forgot my anger.

"I do not mean that, Alice!" I cried. "You look ill and pale. Believe me, I was only jesting."

"I can bear it, Francis. There is nothing on this earth that can not be borne—in one way or other."

She turned and left the room quietly and sadly. The sunshine faded just then, and only a white, pale light came through the window. I so connected it with her sorrow, that to this day I can never see the golden radiance come and go across my path without the same sharp, knife-like pang that I felt then, as the door closed behind her.

CHAPTER IV.

Alice became weaker and grew really ill. A tour on the Continent was strongly recommended by the doctors as the likeliest means of restoration. It was impossible for me to go ; but some friends of ours—one Mr. and Mrs. Warrener, with a young daughter, were going to Italy for six months, and it was arranged that Alice should accompany them.

They remained abroad nine months, instead of six.

At last she returned. I came home tired enough, one evening, to find a letter lying on my table, informing me that she would cross to Dover on the morrow. I went down to Dover to meet her. Our estrangement had worn deep into my heart. She had loved me once ; she should love me again !

I was worn, haggard. I took a bath and made a careful toilet after my hurried journey. As I was taking my last look in the glass, the hotel-waiter came to tell me they had arrived.

I followed him, more nervous than I had ever been before in my life. Warrener grasped my hands as I opened the door, and Mrs. Warrener—bless her kind heart!—burst out crying.

“ Oh ! my dear Frank, I am so glad to see you.

And we have brought you your Alice home, so well!"

Next moment she entered, a little King Charles's spaniel frisking about her feet. I had her in my arms at once but it was not until she kissed me that I knew how cold and pale she was.

"Alice, are you ill?" I asked, holding her away from me, and looking into her face.

Her eyes met mine, but their old light was quite gone.

"Not in the least ill, Frank," she said, quietly. "But you must remember I have not seen you for nine months, and you startled me a little."

My household fairy had fled, and I could only mourn that I should never look upon her sweet young face again. It was another Alice this. I had slain my own Alice, and nothing could reanimate her.

I was like one in a dream all through the day. One morning, as I sat at my solitary breakfast—for Alice took that meal in her room now—the bitter sense of wrong and unhappiness and desertion came over me so strongly that I went up to her room.

"Are you busy?" I asked, as she laid down her pen and looked around.

"Not too busy to talk to you," she said.

"Alice, how long are we to live this life?"

She changed color.

"What life, Frank?"

"The one we are living now. It is not the happy,

loving life we used to live. You are not mine as entirely and lovingly as you once were."

"I know it." And she sighed and looked drearily at me.

"Why cannot the old days come back again? If I made a terrible mistake, can you never forgive it? I thought it was foolish for us to love each other as we did—at least, to show it as we did—but I have found now that love is earth's only true wisdom."

She smiled, sadly.

"Give me back that love, Alice, which I would not have. Oh! give me back the lost sunshine."

I rose from my seat and stood beside her; but she drew back and shook her head.

"Frank, don't ask me for that."

"I shall know how to value it now, Alice."

"That may be; but I have it not to give you, my poor Frank."

I clasped her to my heart. The passion in that heart might almost have brought back life to the dead; but she did not move. She was like a statue in my arms, and only looked at me and sighed.

"Too late! Too late, Frank!"

"Will you never forgive me?"

"Forgive? Do you think I have one unkind thought or feeling towards you, Frank? Ah, no! But I am chilled through and through. My love is dead and buried. Stand away from its grave, and let us meet in the world as we best may."

I leaned my head upon my hands, and my tears fell, and I was not ashamed of them. But they seemed to rouse her into a kind of frenzy.

"You?" she exclaimed, suddenly. "You, who a year ago sowed the seed which has borne this fruit, can you weep over your husbandry now? Don't, Frank! Take what I can give you—take my earnest friendship—and God grant we may never part, here or in heaven."

"Ah! in heaven—if we ever get there—you will love me again."

She quoted those sad words which poor St. Pierre uttered on his dying bed:

"Que ferait une âme isolée dans le ciel même?"
(What would an isolated soul do even in heaven itself?)

And laid her hand gently on mine.

"Heaven knows, dear Alice, that as I loved you when we first met, I loved you on that unhappy day, and love you still!"

"I am glad to hear it," she said, hurriedly. "Heaven only knows what days and nights were mine at first. For my life had been wrapped up in yours, Frank, and it was terrible to separate them. I thought at first that I could not live. I suppose every one thinks so when a heavy blow falls. But strength was given me, and, by and by, peace. We seem like two grey shadows, Frank, in a silent world, and we must only wait God's time; and hope that, on the other side

of the grave, at least, this great mistake may be set right. Believe me, I am happy in being with you, Frank—happy in thinking that the same roof shelters us, and that we shall not part till one of us two dies.”

I opened my arms, and, of her own accord, she came to my heart once more ; her arms were around my neck, and her head upon my shoulder, and her lips meeting mine. Not as they used to, yet tenderly and kindly.

“ We are older and wiser than we were, and sadder, too, dear Frank,” she said, with a smile. “ Yet who knows ? It may be that all the love has not left us yet.”

And thus that chapter of our life ended.

We have never touched upon the subject since ; but I have waited calmly for years, and the same quiet light shines always in the eyes of Alice ; the same deep sad tone thrills my heart when I hear her speaking or singing. An angel could scarcely be gentler or kinder than she who was once so impetuous and full of fire. She was unreasonable and exacting and ardent and impatient in those days, I know, and my slower nature was always on the strain to keep pace with hers ; but, what a bright, joyous, happy creature she was !

It would have been different but for me. Oh, you who read this little tale, remember in time that a kind word and a loving look cost little, although they do such great work ; and that there is no wrong so deep as wrong done to a loving heart.

MADAME DE STAËL.

ALIVE, thy country's highest Power
Still honored, while he feared thy name ;
Dead, thou hast left a princely dower
To nations, who will guard thy fame.

Such a proud gift as he who lives
For human glory only knows—
A wealth that grows by what it gives,
Increasing when it most bestows.

A power, that though his work be done,
Who kindles first its beacon light,
Widens and brightens, shining on
Down through the ages from its height.

Such power, such gift, such light was thine,
O woman of unequalled mind ;
And thy great legacy has been,
Not for thy country, but mankind.

Until a proud posterity,
Whose heart remembers to admire,
Beats its responses back to thee,
And kindles at thy words of fire.

And if a name the world admires,
And honors with but one accord,
Can satisfy the soul's desires,
Thou surely hast a great reward.

Yet well might thy reward be great,
For Justice, with her stern demands,
For every good, or soon or late,
Asks for her payment at our hands.

This was the price she claimed of thee,
This heavy sentence, signed and sealed—
“Banishment, during life, to be
Neither commuted, nor repealed.”

Friends, country, love itself, was lost,
Leaving thee nothing but thy fame,
Alas! how terrible the cost,
For the poor purchase of a name!

What human soul for this would part
With all the human soul can prize?
What woman, with a woman's heart,
Would take it at the sacrifice?

HORTENSE.

REARED in that beautiful land where the sun
Makes everything which he shines on glad,
What, innocent child, couldst thou have done,
That thine after life should be so sad !

What evil stars in thy sky had met,
An influence over thy way to shed ;
That woe's most woeful crown was set
So heavily on thy bright young head ?

Through all the days of a troubled life,
Thine only portion was woe and tears,
As a daughter, mother, friend, or wife,
Down to the end of thy wretched years.

Oh, brighter and better thy lot had been
Had thy early love been its own pure guide,
And they had been saved from a fearful sin
Who broke thy heart in their evil pride.

Early in life began thy doom,
Of hopeless sorrow and sad disgrace ;
As the prison shadow's awful gloom,
Fell heavily over thy childish face.

But bitterer, bitterer still the part
Thy womanhood was doomed to fill ;
Striving to hide away in thy heart
A love which thou couldst not crush nor kill.

And coming sadly at last to stand
Where but happy lovers alone should wed ;
And give to thy bridegroom only a hand,
In place of the heart that was cold and dead.

Wedding one whom thou couldst not love,
Loving one whom thou couldst not wed,
With no hope below, and no hope above,
Mourning over a first-born dead ;

Alas ! we can only mourn and weep
O'er a wasted, profitless, life-time past,
We can only hope thou art well asleep
Where the weary rest from their cares at last.

PHANTOMS OF FONTAINEBLEAU.

AFTER the destruction of the roof and part of the walls, the death of —— called me to Paris, where I remained some weeks, during which our work was suspended. I returned at the end of that time, however, with the necessary orders to continue the new theatre. I left in the afternoon train, and arrived in one of the ugliest winter storms to be witnessed in France. After a hearty dinner at the hotel, and sleepy readings, by nods, of the day's papers, I at last gathered up my little baggage, and wended my way to the snug-gery which I had appropriated in the palace as a sleeping apartment. I passed the sentries muffled in their cloaks and crouching closely to their boxes, and almost stopped in the grand court where so many events have been enacted. I could see the dim outline of the palace—I could almost recognize the circular stairway which so many kings, queens, courtiers, statesmen, beauties, and generals had traversed, and down which Napoleon came to embrace in a last adieu his Old Guard. As I hesitated for a second, staring into the wild night, the old clock above the doorway tolled out the hour of ten. It was indeed the voice of time, tolling its ghostly sum-

mons into the drowsy ear of night. I pulled my cloak closer about me, and sought my little room.

To my great horror, I found, from some interference by our workmen with the roof, the continued rain and snow of the past week had found their way in, and my room was anything but habitable. I had to find other quarters, and the idea of wandering through the vast château in search of a resting-place seemed as dreary as such a search would be through a deserted town at midnight. I had no help for it, however. So, descending to the lodge, I secured the services of old Marie and two men, and we set off in our search for a sleeping-room. I knew the most inhabitable, at least the most comfortable, were those of the Princess ——, known as Madame de la Pompadour's, and thither I conveyed my escort. Here three rooms are almost thrown into one, being separated at the doorways only by the heavy tapestry. The smaller, the bed-room, is a perfect gem. The floor is covered with a carpet, in which the foot sinks noiselessly; the walls are hung with the finest satin; the furniture, of costly woods, is reflected in tall mirrors, and set off by rare paintings, every one of which is worth a journey to look upon.

Madame Marie soon arranged the huge bed, and ordered the men to light the pile of wood in the fireplace of the larger room. The smoke, for a while, rolled heavily into the apartment, but as the heat gathered force, took the proper direction, and in a few minutes I had a capital fire. Left to myself, I drew an

arm-chair from its place, and for more than an hour sat looking into the sputtering fire, and listening to the storm rattling and beating upon the windows. Drowsy at last, I stole to my strange bed—so strange, that I soon wakened to a sense of restlessness, to me unaccountable. I could not get to sleep, but turned and turned for hours, listening to the furious storm, or looking at the fire. At last the blaze went down, and shadows, more and more gloomy, seemed to dance upon the goblin-tapestry in the adjoining chamber, into which I looked, giving a sort of life to the vivid figures. I could, between sleeping and waking, almost see the figures move. In vain I attempted to sleep; the drowsy god forsook my couch the more I courted his soothing presence. My mind took up the many legends—the many cruel deeds which had once made the very stones quake with fright. I thought of the poor man broken alive upon the wheel by Louis the *Just*, because a clumsy trick, harmful to no one but himself, had failed. All the sudden deaths, and mysterious disappearances, would throng my brain. I saw the jealous and infuriated Christine of Sweden approach Monaldeschi, in the dim and ghostly “gallery of Cerfs,” and demand the authorship of certain letters to a fair Italian. I saw her beckon the two assassins and the priest; I heard again the supplications for life—the strange absolution; I saw the murderous attack upon the unarmed man, who, clad in a coat of mail, resisted with his hands, until face and hands were cut to pieces, and, a frightful spectacle,

he blindly fled from his assassins, vainly crying for mercy—until he fell, dying by inches.

I could not clear my brain of this stuff, while the storm dashed itself against the huge windows ; the fire gradually burned down, until the room became more dim, and long shadows began to play upon the goblin tapestry, as if the figures, endowed with life, were flitting by and at each other. I would drop into a doze, and start out again, as if upon the watch, with a feverish sense of uneasiness, difficult to describe. At last, I became conscious of some one being in the room—the larger room adjoining, where now smouldered the fire, and into which I looked through the folding, draped doors. Yes, it was surely so ; some one stood before the fire. Strange to say, I was not startled, or alarmed—only influenced by a strange sense of awe. I could not, and yet I could, see distinctly ; the details were uncertain, but the general outlines were there, marking the fearful man—for it was indeed him. I saw the cocked hat—I could almost see the clear, cold face—the overcoat, the hands folded behind his back. Yes, he stood before that fire, as he had stood before the most fearful camp-fires of Europe.

While I gazed, spell-bound, upon this apparition, another started into existence, from, I thought, the very tapestry at the further end of the room ; and it slowly, and with kingly stateliness, stalked across the floor a gigantic figure, dressed in the costume of another age ; and, as it turned its face slowly as it advanced

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towards the fireplace, I saw the straight line from the forehead to the end of the nose, which marks so decidedly his portrait in the Louvre.

On he walks, turning his head with a stare of surprise, until he melts into the heavy gloom gathered at the further end of the apartment. And now come two others—the one beautiful and fair as a summer's day, her long, silken, auburn locks falling over, and almost hiding the lustrous blue eyes ; the other, dark as night. They, too, glide on and disappear, to be followed by one unlike all others. What a fierce, stern woman ! what a cruel, cold eye ! She, too, the mother of kings, passes on, glaring in hatred at the motionless figure before the dying fire. Hardly had the scowling apparition disappeared, than another came, and so, in contrast, he seemed an angel of light ; mild, quiet, passing slowly on. He gazed, too, in the same direction with the others, but in a look rather of curious astonishment than scorn or hatred. His is not a martial tread or look, yet from the cap droops a long white feather that seems to beckon columns on through the black, thick smoke of battle, while from his breast the red blood welled out, soiling his white vest.

He is gone, and after a pause appear two shadows—the one indistinct and uncertain, with the crown only clearly marked and glittering ; but his companion, tall, thin, is distinctly visible, with eagle eyes, and hooked nose and thin lips. He smiles proudly upon the form which has disturbed them all, and, as he passes on,

a smile of recognition seems to play about his lips. They, too, are gone ; and now they come, not one, nor two, but crowds of shadowy, kingly things, flitting by like figures in a distempered dream. They are gone ; and, while the wind seems breathing a funereal dirge, appears an old, old man, bent with age, who totters by, and, without turning or exhibiting any emotion other than grief, disappears—the last of a royal line. There is a long pause—still the form before the dying fire stands motionless. Will there be another ? I strain my eyes to see. The fire burns lower and lower ; while the gloom deepens, the storm grows loud apace, and seems to change into the echoing roar of cannon and wild cries, as if a nation were gathering into strife ; and now a terrific explosion, and Fontainebleau seems falling about me in ruins. I involuntarily close my eyes, and open them to find the cold, grey light of a winter's dawn stealing into the room. My dream was ended ; the spectres had fled at the ghost's summons ; for,

“ The sentinel cock, shrill chanticleer,
 Had wound his bugle horn,
 And told the early villager
 The coming of the morn.”

M'LLE. LENORMAND.

WHAT strange power, to us unknown,
O'er her early years was thrown,
That, within the convent's cell,
She should study charm and spell,
To discern the things that lie
Hidden from our mortal eye—
Wisely from us still concealed
Till their time to be revealed?

By what witchery did she bring
Statesmen, soldier, priest, and king,
In their hour of gloom or hope,
To consult her horoscope—
Thus to learn the good or ill
Waiting in their future still?
How could she assign their parts
By her dark forbidden arts?



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Haply, she could not discern
More than they who came to learn,
Could not understand or tell
What her power, or whence her spell ;
Haply, she who spake, believed,
If deceiving, still deceived ;
And in her we only find,
That the blind can lead the blind.

For it may be, He whose power
Shuts from us the future hour,
Keeping e'en from angels' ken
What he hath prepared for men ;
When we seek in ways forbid
For the knowledge he has hid,
Leaves us to believe a lie,
And to be destroyed thereby.

For we gain no wisdom higher
Than the wisdom we desire,
Never loud voice from the sky
Answers to a feeble cry ;
Only does the Father speak
To the waiting souls that seek
Only they his truth have heard
Who have sought it in his word.

And but this we learn of thee,
Child of mournful destiny :
Knowledge gained, where faith is lost,
Is not worth the fearful cost.
God saith, " Every child who pleads,
Shall have answer to his needs ;
Trust the future unto me,
As thy day, thy strength shall be."

MADAME JEROME BONAPARTE.

(MISS PATTERSON.)

No fear of future ill we trace,
No mark of sorrow, or of age—
But a most fair and girlish face
Looks on us from the pictured page ;

Her hopeful face, who came to stand
Beside the altar, long ago,
And give her willing heart and hand
For life, with all its weal or woe ;

Her happy face, who could not see,
In that sweet triumph of her power,
How short her dream of bliss would be,
How fearful its awakening hour !

She could not see that gloom begin,
Which o'er her morning sky was thrown,
Nor the long weary years wherein
She should go down life's vale alone.

Ah! well for us, we are forbid
To see what path before us lies—
Ah! wisely hath our Father hid
The future from his children's eyes.

For though the human heart can bear,
Daily, its daily weight of woe,
Yet, if revealed at once, despair
Would break it with a single blow.

And God most righteously bestows
Our lots, though we be sad, or blest;
Our human wisdom only knows,
What seems, and not what is, the best.

Our needs by Him are understood,
His guardian love no child forsakes—
He gives us compensating good
For every blessing which he takes.

So it may be, that we are cared
For most, in darkest hours of gloom—
And, by our very sorrows, spared
From that which might have been our doom.

THE LAST PICTURE.

"The spider's most attenuated thread
Is cord, is cable when compared with that
On which, at times, man's destiny depends."

"THE loveliest thing in life," says a gifted author, "is the mind of a young child." The most sensitive thing, he might have added, is the heart of a young artist. Hiding in his bosom a veiled and unspeakable beauty, the inspired neophyte shrinks from contact with the actual, to lose himself in delicious reveries of an ideal world. In those enchanted regions, the great and powerful of the earth ; the warrior-statesmen of the Elizabethan era ; the steel-clad warriors of the mediæval ages ; gorgeous cathedrals, and the luxuriant pomp of prelates, who had princes for their vassals ; courts of fabled and forgotten kings ; and in the deepening gloom of antiquity, the nude Briton and the painted Pict pass before his enraptured eyes. Women, beautiful creations ! warm with breathing life, yet spiritual as angels, hover around him ; Elysian landscapes are in the distance ; but ever arresting his steps—cold and spec-

tral in his path—stretches forth the rude hand of Reality. Is it surprising that the petty miseries of life weigh down his spirit? Yet the trembling magnet does not seek the north with more unerring fidelity than that “soft, sentient thing,” the artist’s heart, still directs itself amid every calamity, and in every situation, towards its cynosure—perfection of the beautiful. The law which guides the planets attracts the one; the other is influenced by the divine mystery which called the universe itself into being; that sole attribute of genius—creation.

Few artists escape those minor evils which are almost a necessary consequence in an exquisitely sympathetic organization. Fortunately, these are but transient, often requisite, bringing forth hidden faculties and deeper feelings, which else might have lain dormant. But iterated disappointments will wear even into a soul of iron; sadly I write it, *there have been such instances*; but a few years have elapsed since the death of the lamented Haydon; and later, one nearer and dearer, this side the Atlantic, was called to an untimely grave.

Not less true and touching is the tale I have to tell, though it relates to an earlier period:

———“its only charm, in sooth,
If any, will be sad and simple truth.”

In one of those little villages in the north of England which still preserve the antiquated customs and pastimes of past times, there lived, about a century ago,

a young artist by the name of Stanfield. A small freehold estate barely sufficed to support himself and his aged grandmother. They resided in a cottage entirely by themselves, and as he was an orphan and an only child, I need not say how dear he was to that poor old heart. The border ballads she would sit *crooning* to him long winter nights had been as eloquent to him as a mythology, and many a "Douglass and Percie"—many an exploit of "Jonnie Armstrong," "Laidlaw," and "Elliott," adorned the walls of the cottage, depicted, it is true, with rude materials and implements, but sufficiently striking to excite the admiration of the villagers, who wondered, not so much at the manner in which the sketches were executed, as at the fact that such things could be done at all. A beautiful rural landscape surrounded their home; and a view of the Solway, the Irish sea, and the distant coast of Scotland, doubtless had its effect upon the mind of the young painter. Many were the gossipings, during his absence from the cottage, over these early productions of his pencil, and dear to his aged grandmother the rude praises bestowed upon them by her rustic neighbors.

At last the squire called upon him. The meeting was delightful to both. The enthusiasm and innate refinement of the young man—the delicate taste, simplicity, and manly benevolence of the squire, were mutually attractive. A commission to paint a picture was given to Stanfield, and a large apartment in the Manor Hall appropriated to his use. You may be sure that he

was untiring in his efforts now. Room to paint—materials to use—studies on every side—patronage to reward—happy artist! Nor was the want of sweet companionship felt by him. At times, a lovely face startled him at his doorway. Sometimes music, “both of instrument and singing,” floated up the broad staircase. Sometimes he found a chance handful of flowers resting upon his palette. A golden-haired, blue-eyed vision haunted his dreams, waking or sleeping. Happy, happy artist! The squire had an only daughter. Her name was Blanche. The picture was at last completed.

It happened the great Sir Joshua Reynolds at this time paid the squire a visit. Ah! that young heart throbbed then, not less with dread than joy. No doubt, it was a crude production, that picture, but youth, with all its misgivings, is full of hope, and the young artist, in spite of the wise admonitions of his patron, insisted upon concealing himself behind the canvas, that he might hear the *candid* opinion of the great painter. It is scarcely necessary to refer to the fact, that Sir Joshua was deaf, and his voice, in consequence, had that sharpness usual in persons so affected. The expected day arrived. The squire and his guests stood before the picture. A sweet voice, like a thread of gold, sometimes mingled with the praises of the rest. At last, Sir Joshua spoke. Stanfield listened intently. He heard his picture *condemned*! Still he listened, his heart beating against his side almost audibly; there might be some redeeming points? Like an inexorable judge, the old

painter heaped objection upon objection, and that too in tones, it seemed, of peculiar asperity. Poor Stanfield felt as if the icy hand of death were laid upon his heart, and then, with a sickening shudder, fell senseless upon the floor.

They raised him—he recovered, was restored to life ; but what was life to him ?

From that time, he drooped daily. At last his kind patron sent him to Rome. There, amid the eternal monuments of art, avoiding all companions, immured in his little studio, he busied himself steadily, but feebly, with a work which proved to be his last.

It represented a precipitous cliff to the brink of which a little child had crept. One tiny hand stretched out over the abyss, and its baby face was turned, with a smile, towards its mother, from whose arms it had evidently just escaped. That playful look was a challenge for her to advance, and she, poor mother, with that deep, dumb despair in her face, saw the heedless innocent just poised upon the brink, beyond her reach, and knew that if she moved towards it a single step, *it too would move*, to certain death. But with heaven-taught instinct, she had torn the drapery from her breast, and exposed the sweet fountain of life to her infant. Spite of its peril you felt it would be saved.

Such was the picture. Day after day, when the artists, his friends, gathered at their customary meals, his poor, pale face was seen among them, listless, without a smile, and seemingly wistful of the end, when he

might retire again to his secluded studio. One day he was missing. The second came, but he came not. The third arrived—still absent. A presentiment of his fate seemed to have infused itself in every mind. They went to his room. There, seated in a chair before his unfinished picture they found him—dead—his pencil in his hand.

GRACE INGERSOLL.

WHERE God placeth any creature,
Where he planteth any seed,
Each may find what best will answer
True development and need.

There are blossoms on the mountains,
Braving even Alpine snow,
That would perish if transplanted
To the valleys down below.

On our northern hills are roses,
Never fearing winter's breath,
That the kisses of the south-wind
Would but wither into death.

True, the plant awhile may flourish,
Forced some foreign bower to grace,
But its root would strike down deeper
In its native soil and place.

Shut out from the earth's green places,
Is the wild bird's music best?
Does its voice not sound the sweetest
Singing nearest to its nest?

And thou wert like bird or blossom,
Daughter of a northern race—
Thou couldst neither sing nor flourish,
Taken from thy native place.

Going straight to woman's duties,
From thy childish joys and sports,
From the free air of the mountains,
To the atmosphere of courts,

Can we marvel if the footstep,
Which trod lightly on the plain,
Should be hindered in its movement
By the drapery of the train?

Can we marvel, when we see her
Borne from home and friends away,
If her voice went out in silence,
And her beauty to decay?

No, we marvel not, yet mourn thee,
Lying in thy foreign tomb,
Fairest flower of all New England,
This should not have been thy doom!

MADAME REGNAULT.

I THINK the humblest peasant girl,
Roaming the valleys free,
If loved and cherished in her home,
Could never envy thee ;
But rather weep above thy fate—
So proud, and yet so desolate.

Midst all the ladies of the court
Still wert thou most forlorn,
E'en for thy very beauty's sake
A target for their scorn ;
Envy, and bitter rivalry,
Drove from their hearts all love for thee.

And e'en the Monarch, whom through life
Thou didst revere and trust,
He, to thy worth and loveliness,
Was cruel and unjust ;
O'er him, the noblest woman's power
Could last but for an idle hour.

The weak were objects of his scorn,
The wise, his fear and dread ;
He heaped with shame, from mere caprice,
The unoffending head.
And they who dared to brave his wrath
Were swept unpitied from his path.

Though hopes, or even hearts must break,
He ruled unthwarted still,
Friends, sisters, even his wife at last,
He sacrificed at will ;
Was retribution for the past
That none were near him at the last ?

O woe ! to thee, fair lady, woe,
That such fidelity
As thine was poured on one who gave
So little back to thee ;
Woe, that thou shouldst have bowed thy head
For shame, thou hadst not merited.

And woe, for him who faltered not
For woman's suffering ;
Must there not come to him at last
A fearful reckoning ?
When all who suffered for his sake
Are heard, what answer can he make ?

GROWING OLD

BY MISS MULOCK.

“Do ye think of the days that are gone, Jeanie,
As ye sit by your fire at night?
Do ye wish that the morn would bring back the time,
When your heart and your step were so light?
‘I think of the days that are gone, Robin,
And of all that I joyed in then;
But the brightest that ever arose on me,
I have never wished back again.’”

GROWING old! A time we talk of, and jest or moralize over, but find almost impossible to realize—at least to ourselves. In others, we can see its approach clearer: yet even then we are slow to recognize it. “What, Miss So-and-so looking old, did you say? Impossible! she is quite a young person: only a year older than I—and that would make her just Bless me! I am forgetting how time goes on. Yes,”—with a faint deprecation which truth forbids you to contradict, and politeness to notice—“I suppose we are neither of us so young as we used to be.”

Without doubt, it is a trying crisis in a woman's life—a single woman particularly—when she begins to suspect she is “not so young as she used to be;” that, after crying “Wolf” ever since the respectable maturity of seventeen—as some young ladies are fond of doing, to the extreme amusement of their friends—the grim wolf, old age, is actually showing his teeth in the distance; and no courteous blindness on the part of these said friends, no alarmed indifference on her own, can neutralize the fact that he is, if still far off, in sight. And, however charmingly poetical he may appear to sweet fourteen-and-a-half, who writes melancholy verses about ‘I wish I were again a child,’ or merry three-and-twenty, who preserves in silver paper “my first grey hair,” old age, viewed as a near approaching reality, is—quite another thing.

To feel that you have had your fair half at least of the ordinary term of years allotted to mortals; that you have no right to expect to be any handsomer, or stronger, or happier than you are now; that you have climbed to the summit of life, whence the next step must necessarily be decadence; ay, though you do not feel it, though the air may be as fresh, and the view as grand—still, you know that it is so. Slower or faster, you are going down hill. To those who go “hand-in-hand,”

“And sleep thegither at the foot,”

it may be a safer and sweeter descent; but I am writing for those who have to make the descent alone.

It is not a pleasant descent at the beginning. When you find at parties that you are not asked to dance as much as formerly, and your partners are chiefly stout, middle-aged gentlemen, and slim lads, who blush terribly and require a great deal of drawing out ; when you are "dear"-ed and patronized by stylish young chits, who were in their cradles when you were a grown woman ; or when some boy, who was your plaything in petticoats, has the impertinence to look over your head, bearded and grand, or even to consult you on his love-affairs ; when you find your acquaintance delicately abstaining from the term "old maid," in your presence, or immediately qualifying it by an eager panegyric on the solitary sisterhood ; when servants address you as "Ma'am," instead of "Miss ;" and if you are at all stout and comfortable-looking, strange shopkeepers persist in making out your bills to "Mrs. Blank," and pressing upon your notice toys and perambulators.

Rather trying, too, when, in speaking of yourself as a "girl"—which, from long habit, you unwittingly do—you detect a covert smile on the face of your interlocutor ; or, led by chance excitement to deport yourself in an ultra-youthful manner, some instinct warns you that you are making yourself ridiculous. Or catching in some strange looking-glass the face that you are too familiar with to notice much, ordinarily, you suddenly become aware that it is *not* a young face ; that it will never be a young face again ; that it will gradually alter and alter, until the known face of your girlhood,

whether plain or pretty, loved or disliked, admired or despised, will have altogether vanished—nay, is vanished : look as you will, you cannot see it any more.

There is no denying the fact, and it ought to silence many an ill-natured remark upon those unlucky ones who insist on remaining “ young ladies of a certain age,”—that with most people the passing from maturity to middle age is so gradual, as to be almost imperceptible to the individual concerned. It is very difficult for a woman to recognize that she is growing old ; and to many—nay, to all more or less—this recognition cannot but be fraught with considerable pain. Even the most frivolous are somewhat to be pitied, when, not conducting themselves as *passées*, because they really do not think it, they expose themselves to all manner of misconstructions by still determinedly grasping that fair sceptre of youth, which they never suspect is now the merest “ rag of sovereignty”—sovereignty deposed.

Nor can the most sensible woman fairly put aside her youth, with all it has enjoyed, or lost, or missed ; its hopes and interests, omissions and commissions, doings and sufferings ; satisfied that it is henceforth to be considered as a thing gone by—without a momentary spasm of the heart. Young people forget this as completely as they forget that they themselves may one day experience the same, or they would not be so ready to laugh at even the foolishhest of those foolish old virgins who deems herself juvenile long after everybody else has ceased to share in the pleasing delusion, and thereby

makes both useless and ridiculous that season of early autumn which ought to be the most peaceful, abundant, safe, and sacred time in a woman's whole existence. They would not, with the proverbial harsh judgment of youth, scorn so cruelly those poor little absurdities, of which the unlucky person who indulges therein is probably quite unaware—merely dresses as she has always done, and carries on the harmless coquetries and *minauderies* of her teens, unconscious how exceedingly ludicrous they appear in a lady of—say forty! Yet in this sort of exhibition, which society too often sees and enjoys, any honest heart cannot but often feel, that of all the actors engaged in it the one who plays the least objectionable and disgraceful part is she who only makes a fool of *herself*.

Alas! why should she do it? Why cling so desperately to the youth that will not stay? and which, after all, is not such a very precious or even a happy thing. Why give herself such a world of trouble to deny or conceal her exact age, when half her acquaintance must either know it or guess it, or be supremely indifferent about it? Why appear dressed—*undressed*, cynics would say—after the pattern of her niece, the belle of the ball; annoying the eye with beauty either half withered or long overblown, and which in its prime would have been all the lovelier for more concealment?

M'LE GEORGES.

PLEASANT hopes at life's bright sunrise
Courage for its noonday toil,
And calm quiet at its sunset,
Hushing all the long turmoil.

These the blessings which our Father
Sends us in our earthly home—
Making kind and good provision
For all seasons as they come—

Giving strength for the performance
Of each duty which life brings—
Giving faith, whereby securely
We take hold on heavenly things

And each day that we are marking
By good thought, or better deed
Makes its own best preparation
For the day that shall succeed.

Nothing that is good can perish,
Hope, or virtue, love, or truth ;
If we rightly live the present,
We shall not regret our youth.

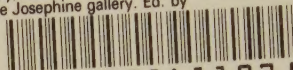
For if we are only adding
Truest wisdom to our store,
Every day we live is better
Than the day that went before.

Child of genius, wit, and beauty,
Bright thy day at morning rose ;
Hast thou gained no hope or memory
That can beautify its close ?

Ah ! life's vanities and follies
Made thy pleasures in the past—
And vain effort to recall them
Is thy solace at the last.

Better hadst thou spent in duty
Years but wasted for renown,
Then thy white hairs should adorn thee
And their glory be thy crown !

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